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OLD AND NEW

Thoughts on the Modern Study of History

by

F. S. MARVIN, M.A., F.R.Hist.Soc.

Author of 'The Living Past'; Director of the Unity History Schools, and Editor of the 'Unity Series.'

'Ye belong, with all that ye possess,
'not to your selves, but to your kind—
'the past and those that are to come.'
Plato, *Laws*, XI, 923 A.

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PREFACE

In 1913 a little book was published called *The Living Past*, which has continued to circulate ever since, with little alteration except to the list of books for general historical reading which has been kept up to date by revision in the subsequent editions. The present volume is in no sense a replica of that book, but might be regarded as a companion. The underlying ideas, coming as they do from the same author, remain the same, but an effort has been made to expand them in two directions which it may be useful to point out. In the first place, the introductory chapters in this book attempt to define, rather more fully and precisely, what we are doing in the study of the past which is called 'history', and how this process has been changed and widened by the general movement of thought in modern times. In the second place, a rather fuller treatment has been given in the rest of the book to certain selected aspects of history, which possess either special beauty or special importance in the building up of mankind. It will be clear at a glance that there is no idea of offering another short history of the world. But it was thought that it might be encouraging to those already attracted by the greatest subject of study in the world to present as it were in a chain, some of the brightest spots in the story. It can do nothing but good, in a somewhat troubled and clouded state of the world, to direct the mind deliberately to such occasions

of triumph and achievement in the past. These glorious things have been done. Why should we not hope to do still better in the future?

An acknowledgment should be made here concerning the title of Chapter IV, which was suggested by that of Dr. J. H. Breasted's most interesting book on the same subject, published by Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons. For lists of books for further study it may perhaps suffice for the present to refer to the Appendix in *The Living Past*. Before long it will be necessary to issue a further revision there or elsewhere. Annotated lists of such books on many historical subjects are also issued by the Historical Association, which has its offices at 22, Russell Square, W.C.1.

F.S.M.

Pantiles,
Welwyn G.C.,
July, 1935.

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I

THE CHANGE OF VIEW

"I READ it a little as a duty," said Jane Austen's Catherine Morland, "but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars or pestilences in every page; the men all good for nothing, and hardly any women at all—it is very tiresome; and yet I often think it odd that it should be so dull, for a great deal of it must be invention."

That was written a hundred and thirty-seven years ago, just as Napoleon was removing the Pope from Rome; and many of us, especially the older, will find an echo in our own experience. Much of the history then taught had those features, and some of it retains them still. But on the whole a change has come over the scene, and no novelist for the last fifty years would put quite those words into her heroine's mouth as a description of the history offered by the libraries, or even the schoolrooms, of her youth. A century passed between Jane Austen's youth and George Eliot's maturity, containing some of the most startling events in all history; but nothing occurred in it more far-reaching than the change in men's ideas as to the way in which events happen, and the way in which they should be studied and described. These are the external aspects and the instruments of history, and as history affects us all—all living things indeed—it would be difficult to exaggerate its scope. One thing at least is certain. It would be well to have some idea of the general nature of the subject as now conceived, before identifying it with the topics which aroused so much distaste in Catherine Morland and Herbert Spencer.

The Catherine Morland of to-day, with some taste for what she regards as serious reading, could hardly describe the new books on history, offered by the libraries, or reviewed by the daily press, as tiresome. There are the sparkling epigrams of Philip Guedalla, the cynical wit of Lytton Strachey, the polished and sensational learning of Lion Feuchtwanger. Nor are women wanting to enliven the popular history of the day, though one might often wish them to play a worthier rôle in it. The sensational best-sellers on history may even compete with a novel and run popular astronomy a good second. Macaulay—with, of course, much more to his credit—set the high-water mark for popular success of this kind, and no one since then can say, either that history may not beguile the dullest moments or the most jaded palates, or that those who write it may not live of their works. But this is not quite the change of view which we had in mind. The application of the methods of the novelist or the popular sketch-writer to historical subjects, so far as interests a larger public in the past, is doing good. But it is mischievous, so far as it suggests that the past was made up of purple patches and blood-curdling events.

We need to look deeper and over a larger area to understand the revolution which has taken place; for the change is not less than a revolution. Herodotus would easily have passed muster with the best-sellers of any time; but the warmest admirers of the Father of History would not contend that he wrote from the point of view which is now imposed upon the historian by the knowledge and thought of recent years.

In estimating these changes it will be best to take the more concrete and tangible features first, leaving to the last the more impalpable though profound factors which arise from the spirit . . . The growth of the field is no doubt the most impressive fact which first

strikes the eye. In every part and kind of history the material has grown so much in a hundred years, and continues so to grow, that nothing now seems final, and every judgment of a period or a people or a figure in the past becomes imbedded in a mass of facts and theories of deepening complexity and widening extent. We end our study of everything with the hope that some day we may know more and be able to speak with more confidence. This is true most conspicuously of the earlier past. Whereas our great grandparents were content to confine the existence of the whole human race within the last six thousand years, we now know—one of the few points of unassailable certainty—that the year they had fixed on for the commencement of all things, was really an age of culminating civilization with hundreds of thousands of years behind it in which mankind had been slowly climbing to one of its eminences. The flowering of Egypt and Babylonia takes the place in our time-chart assigned before to the Creation of the World, and all the scales are altered in proportion. The only parallel —and it is curiously similar—is the throwing out of the boundaries of the universe so that the solar system which we had been thinking supreme, became just a speck in the Infinite Whole.

It would be enough indeed to have all this fresh field to cultivate, but the same century which has given us this, has also added, within the old area of recorded history, a mass of material which far outweighs in quantity all that had been secured before. It has been the age of excavation, of deciphering inscriptions, of comparing monuments, manuscripts and documents. The spade has revealed Ancient Egypt, Mycenean Troy, Minoan Crete and a host of other sites, while at the same time whole new sciences of anthropology have arisen from the study of yet earlier men. The only parallel is

again from the physical sciences of our own days. Every non-human science—physics, chemistry, botany, zoology —shows a comparable growth, and nothing like it has ever happened on the earth before.

These are the external palpable facts. By themselves they might mean only the stifling of the enquiring mind by the volume of the material that it had acquired. The mental attitude behind the facts imports the more. What does man think of all this wealth? What use is he making of it? How does it affect his personal character, and how is it likely to affect it? Such are the questions which we rightly ask of a material fortune; they are equally appropriate to the riches of the mind.

The first mental quality which strikes us about all this activity, and the one about which there can be least dispute, is the general increase in a disinterested curiosity about the past. One is right to lay stress on the disinterestedness, because there is a marked difference in this respect between the spirit in which men now generally study the past, and try to recover and preserve its remains, and the spirit in which they did so, let us say so lately as the end of the eighteenth century. Too often in those days the prevailing motive was to discover in the past precedents for what the seeker desired in the present. The French republican acclaimed Harmodius and Aristogeiton, the clerical the good deeds of the monks, the Englishman the framers of Magna Charta. To preserve the evidence of man's past life, to admire it when beautiful and understand its genesis, was still a rare plant in the West: to-day it is a leading interest with all civilized man.

Those who are doing this work of recovery and preservation are not themselves necessarily, or usually, those who philosophize about the ultimate bearings or principles involved in what they are doing. They do it because they are interested, just as the naturalist is

interested in the habits of animals, though what he notices may prove to be material for building up a theory of evolution. But the deeper and wider thinking goes on all the time in some minds, and becomes afterwards the force which moulds society and frames the universe of thought. Thus while explorers of all sorts have been throwing up the masses of fact from which the past is being reconstructed, there has been growing the conviction that the present must be explained as the child, the offspring of the past.

This conviction rides securely over the tempests of freewill and determinism, which belong to another order or way of thinking about thought. The ascertained, the ascertainable, sequence of past, present and future is admitted by all the canons of moral or legal theory and practice. Having been always the unconscious guide of thinking men in practical life, this truth has become more and more dominant in men's study of the past: but it is a truth which only dawned slowly on their consciousness. One cannot say that the Greeks, with all their genius, or the ancient priests, with all their wisdom, attained to it; otherwise it would not have been left to us to interpret the Lion Gate at Mycenæ or the Palace of Cnossos. To them, and indeed to men generally up to the Renascence, the successive stages of civilization were special theophanies or acts of heroes. Athena had sprung ready armed from the brain of her father Zeus. Prometheus had given men fire and other blessings. Hercules and Cadmus had laboured in beneficent spheres. One may find indeed, inklings of the truth in ancient writers, but it did not take definite shape and establish itself in men's minds till the end of the eighteenth century. In the light of this truth, that the present follows the past as a natural growth—we, like all the students, must examine the relations of old and new.

There have been great surprises and apparent contradictions in reconciling many of the outstanding achievements of the past with any idea of a continuous sequence.

The men of the Renascence, for instance, who first discovered the achievements of the ancients, thought, like the Greeks before them, that they beheld a miracle, and that the intervening space was a time of degradation and pure barbarism. Many held that the ancients had never been, and could not be, surpassed, and all that led up to the art and science of Greece, and all that religion had done, since the Greeks, to humanize the world, were alike ignored. A famous battle of the Ancients and the Moderns raged at the end of the seventeenth century, and it was not till the fury of the French Revolution died down in the early nineteenth century that the truer and more comprehensive view began to prevail. Some of its special aspects we shall review in later chapters, but the general outline may be sketched here, before we come to the great theory of the evolution of life as a whole which was perceived at the end of the nineteenth century.

The larger view sees in the general course of human history an upward movement in which we may clearly distinguish three aspects. The human individual becomes, on the average, more self-sufficient and self-directing. At the same time the individuals of human society are more closely united one to another and they also possess, as a whole, far greater efficiency and control towards the external world.

Now history, which deals with man socially, must concern itself mainly with the two latter aspects, though by no means losing sight of the former which to some thinkers is the crown and purpose of the whole.

Let us first think of mankind, as one great living thing, and see what light the analogy suggests for our study

of history. A living thing has within it some principle or method of acting together as one, and it grows by acting on its environment. Grant, as we must, that mankind is one, a species distinct from all other animals, and acting co-operatively and similarly in a thousand ways all over the planet, and we see that its history is the story of this process, seen in its double aspect of action within and action without. The various special topics of history, government, literature, law, science and art—are aspects of this activity, and can only be understood if studied as parts of the whole process. 'Man in growth' is the subject; and, even were 'Man in decay' the melancholy theme, we should be compelled to judge of that change in the same way. We should then see the social bonds relaxed and the enfeebled isolated units losing their grip also of the surrounding universe.

Within this general framework there is scope for, and there has been seen, an infinite variety of local and temporary types. At one time or place a special advance has been made in one form of activity, with, usually, a setback in some others. In China, for instance, while art was developing in forms of gracious beauty which we have only lately come to appreciate and cannot rival, science was stagnant. In Greece, which often seems an epitome of human excellence, there was, beneath the measured beauty of her art and the ingenuity of her science, a heartlessness which tolerated the calculated massacre of infant girls and the unthinkable horrors of the slave mines. In the Middle Ages, while a new tenderness and respect for women came to birth, the bonds of civil government were loosened, and men lost for a time their bold and enquiring attitude towards the world. Our yardstick therefore for measuring the advance must be long and, like Einstein's, somewhat elastic. But the last century—date it, say, from Kant

and Herder—has achieved the momentous step of coming to see that there is something to be measured, and supplying a first rough approximation.

Art, in the strict sense, does not supply the needed yardstick, even though we held that man's creative powers were his highest function. For as art is man's expression of his impressions of the outer world, seen in an inner light, it must always have an individual tone, and may be as perfect of its kind in the cave-man's painting as on the Acropolis. It is indicative of the surrounding civilization, but not a direct measure of it. For that purpose government, morality, science, are the more serviceable instruments. Using those, it is possible to make out a few main stages in the historic process about which most general historians would be agreed, and to which reference will be made in the succeeding chapters.

The earliest and the longest is that about which we know the least, that in which man conquered and established himself above the lower animals. Being so long, so critical and so thrilling, it has in recent years engaged a growing number of students, and will no doubt in the future engage still more. It is, as we shall see in a moment, the vital point in the new view of history which links it up with the science of life as a whole. Clearly here, if anywhere, the two broad aspects of man's progressive activity will be visible,—the improvement of his technique for human co-operation, the improvement of his knowledge and use of the external world. Speech and all the laws of tribal and personal relationship come under the first heading. Fire, tools, the taming of animals, and the cultivation of the soil, under the second.

As our knowledge of the later civilizations increases, especially those of Egypt and Mesopotamia, where most work has been done, they are seen to shade off backwards

into that earlier time which we call for distinction pre-history. It is impossible strictly to divide either historic or pre-historic periods, and all such divisions are rough and arbitrary, though necessary for clearness in arrangement and for comparison. Writing and the use of metals are commonly thought of as the leading characteristics of the earliest stage to which the name of history is usually attached. They are certainly marked features of the civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia, for to them we owe the first written records and the first semi-scientific metallurgy which we possess. On the more purely human side of life, we are now learning from the written records that to this stage also belong the earliest formulation of moral and legal ideas which have since become part of the framework of men's minds. One last, and perhaps most important, feature marks this stage. Men's thoughts and government were dominated by the idea that their living rulers were identical with the eternal forces behind phenomena. It was the age of 'theocracy' of which the Jewish state became later the most strongly marked and influential example.

Up to this point one may use a common classification for the world. Broadly speaking, all civilizations which have gone so far, have gone through those stages. Then came a a forward dividing step made by one branch of mankind which marked them off from the rest, and caused a certain breach in the social unity of the race which is not yet completely healed. This was the work of the Greeks, and it lies in the free use of the intellect, criticizing and modifying the usages of the old theocracies, inquiring into the natural causes of things and asserting the right and duty of men to order their lives and their societies in accordance with the answer their reason gave. There was much else in the miracle of Greece, but this was the capital point,

and it was as clearly vindicated in the school of Plato as on the plains of Marathon.

Owing to the fact that until lately the larger part of the story of mankind was veiled in darkness, there was a tendency to treat the exploits of the Greeks as the beginning of ancient history. It would in fact be more reasonable to treat their achievement as the great dividing line between what is really ancient, and the 'modern' world of which we can actually feel ourselves a part. One feels this clearly in the dialogues of Plato, with whom we can easily imagine ourselves sitting in the Socratic circle, more at home indeed than in a mediæval monastery or in the Versailles of Louis XIV.

Close following on the pioneer work of the Greek thinkers and poets, comes the work of diffusion and consolidation done, first by Alexander and then by Rome. These should be regarded in close conjunction, and special attention given to the three centuries which separate the death of Alexander from the final establishment of the Empire by Augustus. The goal first envisaged by Alexander, and realized for a time by the Stoic emperors of the second century A.D., has much in common with that which we are now labouring to gain under the League of Nations—a world of men living peaceably by laws accepted by, and suitable to, their needs, and governed by those who make the interests of the governed their highest duty. This was the aim of Roman law at its best, guided by Greek reason. But the first sketch had such deep weaknesses and huge lacunæ that it broke down after a short attempt, and the period which is commonly known as the Middle Ages, intervened, before a fresh start was made at the Renascence by asserting again, this time in Italy, the primacy of the reason and the need of revising theocratic rules. But the Europe which had by then been formed, and was unquestionably in the sixteenth and seven-

teenth centuries the vanguard of mankind, differed profoundly from that which the Roman Empire had achieved. The Middle Ages, although they witnessed an eclipse of science and much political disorder, were yet the seed-time of the two greatest harvests which the Greco-Roman world had needed—nations, and private morality, based on a higher standard of love and personal devotion, and more respect for women.

Of these the latter is a general advance, which may be paralleled in many parts, though specially favoured by Christianity; the former is a characteristic feature of Western Europe and has given her the expansive power shown so markedly throughout the world in the last three centuries. Nations, i.e., large groups of men acting steadily together, supporting one another in their distant ventures, holding similar traditions and kindred hopes, have in the modern world become so dominant that most people think of history only in that framework. It was indeed indispensable, as the family is indispensable in private life, though a wider consciousness of mankind as a whole is gradually embracing and subordinating it. In estimating the value of this phase of 'nationhood,' it will be right for us, using the English language, to lay some special stress on the part played by those who speak it in building up the general advance of mankind. There are three good reasons.

1.—The English—or British—nation has achieved more successfully, and over a longer period, the holding together of its members under a continuous and generally accepted government than any other.

2.—It has, mainly through this fact, carried to the largest extent of the world the principles and practice of Western civilization as they have been developed by Greece, Rome and Christianity.

3.—It is now, through its daughter-nations and its connexions and dependencies overseas, the chief linking

force in the world, the chief ultimate guarantor of the universality of the League of Nations.

Yet one must conclude this first survey of the whole field on another note.

The most far-reaching change of mind in recent times, which is only now beginning to affect our view of history, does not relate either to methods of study or to the comparative value of periods or to the technique of presentation. It is not the new and rather dubious proposition that 'contemporary' history is the most important aspect and best line of approach to the subject. Nor is it the philosophic, and eternally debatable, doctrine that historic facts must take their place with other facts of science to be determined with the same degree of precision as the fall of stones or the movement of the planets. On these lines one may reach the pseudo-history of Marx. The revolution which is taking place, like all the greatest, is rather an evolution, the gradual dawning of the truth that the history of man is only a section, though the highest, of all life, and that it is in connexion with the sciences of life that it is to be studied and will be ultimately most enlightened. The nineteenth century was the birth-time of biology and Darwin's is the weightiest name. It was no accident which led his mind on from careful study of marine creatures and earth worms to speculations on the descent of man. Speculative in large part he was, as every advancing thinker must be; but of his combined observations and speculations one broad result has been established in men's minds, affecting history as it has affected every part of thought. Life is an evolving thing, growing in fulness and complexity. Man's life is the crown, differing immeasurably from that of lower creatures, and yet capable of being traced back in all its particulars to those humbler than itself, impossible to cut off

sharply at any point even from the humblest. As this evolution of man's being has actually taken place in time and on the earth, it cannot be broken up, except arbitrarily and for purpose of study, into independent parts. We are accustomed to speak only of 'history,' as from the time of written records, but what is writing except a specialized form of pictorial record adapted for wider use? And with the picture we are back at once among the men of the cave, still in deadly conflict with mammoth and reindeer, and devising cleverer tools to vanquish them. Language again—the inner side of writing—goes back uninterruptedly to the simplest sounds that any creature may make, with another creature to receive them, and the air as a medium of transmission.

History thus becomes infinite in its backward as well as in its forward glance. But, though thus extended, it need not lose either its accuracy, its connectedness, or its charm, in the separate parts. Great ideas are not for confusion, but for inspiration. This one, which may well prove the master-idea of the future, has two obvious applications which are all that can be noted here before we proceed to the details of later chapters. The first is the enormous enhancement of what is called 'prehistory,' which follows from the establishment of the evolutionary view. What we have been speaking of hitherto as 'history', becomes a mere moment, invaluable no doubt, but infinitesimal compared with the æons in which the nature of man was being built up and the foundations of his work laid down. How much we shall ever know of this process it is impossible to predict, but certain that men will strain every nerve to know more. Except his future, nothing could interest him more to know than this.

The other obvious application looks towards the future. There has always been this element in history.

As soon as men came to think of their present as being based on their past, their thought inevitably went on to picture the future as an extension and firmer establishment of the things they prized most in the present. So Virgil, in tracing the divine descent and rise of Augustus from Æneas, goes on to picture the whole world pacified under Roman rule. So Bossuet, tracing the final triumph of the Catholic Church from the earliest conception of God in the world. So Comte, in his vision of humanity united in peaceful industry directed by science. As the thinker reflects on the memorials of the past, and is not content merely to collect them, he is bound to look forward and ask himself what will happen, when the present becomes in its turn the memorials of another age. To the widened view of history which recent biological thought has opened up, the prospect becomes immeasurably fuller, of meaning, of hope and of responsibility. For Man—and every individual as a partial epitome of the whole—stands in the vanguard, not only of his race or civilization, but of Life itself. This need not be called a new religion, for the old word arouses so many and conflicting currents of opinion, and the new thoughts have not yet crystalized themselves into a coherent form. But it is clear that the new view, of life and of history, must affect profoundly the religion of any thinker who meditates upon it. No higher claim can be made for the study of history, and no lower should satisfy the student of to-day.

II

THE PURPOSE OF STUDY

If history should be studied with a view to the future, one might think, from the abundance of writings which forecast events, that the work was being well done. But the slightest examination of these forecasts would raise grave doubts. The "Next War" or the wonders of 'Science in the Millennium' figure so often and so confidently that one is bound to think rather of the presuppositions of the authors than of their well-balanced judgment. It is not surprising that they should be thus obsessed, for the age we live in has just witnessed two series of events calculated to upset the best grounded prophets. On the one hand, the Great War, with all its consequences, came at a time when a long priod of peace and increasing industrial activity and co-operation in the world had seemed to be preparing a different sequel. On the other hand, both before and since the War, the discoveries and applications of science have been outstripping the liveliest flights of fancy. The prophets have been confounded and lifted off their feet by the excitement. Some of them, like Mr. H. G. Wells, had always advocated a bold use of the imagination, and he has Plato at his side in urging the deliberate framing of Utopias to stimulate action. Others, especially those who talk of the Next War, also do it deliberately, in order to stir men up to avoid the horrors which they depict. Such things as these, they mean, are possible, if men do not take care. By heightening the horror they hope to increase the caution.

We do not propose here to discuss the details or the probabilities of such forecasts. The forward-looking

glance with which the first chapter ended, does not imply an Old Moore's Almanac, and another proviso should be added. Although it is right to be looking forward, the forward glance is not the first inducement, or the first natural result of studying history. The first inducement must be interest, the desire to know how people lived who preceded us upon the earth, just as the child will want to know about his parents' lives long before he has any idea of imitating or improving on them.

Interest therefore must come first, interest in the thing itself, cultivated so that it gives a sense of the reality of the past which can never be lost. It should not be an oppressive sense, as of a thing unescapable and weighing us down, but of a living thing of which we are members, making it more living still. This building up and extention of the past in our minds, is so important a fact that we must stay a moment here to try and grasp its significance a little better. It is one of the two most obvious aspects of the growth of the human mind. This growth of mind, or soul, is the core of history; in its fulness it is the supreme event which is open to our reasoning faculties to observe, to study and to establish. Speaking, first, merely of its intellectual scope, we see that it has two different main directions, somehow connected in our being, but obviously separated as we apprehend them. There is the extension into space, which gives us physical science; and the extension backwards into time which gives us history. Always and everywhere as man has grown, these two extensions of mind have gone on. Their germ exists in the simplest form of mind which we can imagine, for every appetition, or stretching outwards, is a movement into space, and every memory a movement backwards into time. Man grows, and from the extension of his mind into space come the beginnings of mathematics, counting and measuring, the noting of the

qualities of external things, the application of these methods to the brightest and most regularly moving objects of his vision in the heavens. From the extension of the mind backwards into time came the deification of his memories, the worship of ancestors, the weaving of myths explaining the beginnings of things and the gifts of all the blessings of daily life. Just as the former, carved in space, are the material of physical science, so the latter, criticized, pruned and made solid and consistent, become the fabric of history.

Essentially it is the same process eternally renewed. Each generation remakes its history afresh; but if we take a broad view, it is clear enough that the past, as men view and hold it, has become fuller, more coherent and infinitely wider in extent. To take part in this work is the main purpose of the study of history. It follows on, and is the natural result of, interest, and must take precedence of any form of applying the lessons of forecasting the future. The peculiar fascination and importance of studying history is that the mind is turned on to observing and criticizing the very process by which it has itself come to be; and by the study, it adds material to the wider mind of another generation. Something of this sort must happen whatever the general ideals of those who study. But it will be suggested in later chapters that a selective process, quite legitimate in itself, might have still further and highly valuable results. Here we note only that the realization of the human past, the correction, extension and bringing together of the whole is the chief purpose of study, arising from a natural interest which it is the business of teachers and other elders to develop in the young.

It will be seen that this is a very general statement, and it is right that at first this should be so. In every age and in every country there is a certain amount of knowledge and interest in things of the past and it is

distributed in varying degrees among the population. One may distinguish, however, three clearly marked classes of people by their attitude in this matter. The first is the smallest, but the most important, in view of increasing the fulness and extent of our knowledge of the past. These are the persons who make it their life-work to study history, and aim in most cases at adding something to the definite acquired stock. It is in their case that the great change was chiefly wrought which was described in the last chapter. The mass of material, the care and orderliness in treating it, the improved powers of criticism and inference, the greater art in presentation, have combined to make a revolution in this field. In this respect historiography has shared the beneficial influences of science in general, and become itself a science.* The second main class of people is perhaps much the same in relative extent as it has been at any time since the Renascence—those, namely, who have had a fairly good general education and have continued in life to extend their knowledge of history by reading on some line which interested them and by studying ancient remains which come their way. These form the membership of all the Antiquarian, Archæological and Historical societies which abound. Among these there is certainly to be found a much greater keenness about ancient remains, a greater respect for early art and a stronger sense of the continuity of events. There remains, however, far the largest class of all, the mass of the population, whose knowledge of history depends on lessons learnt at school, and the later scraps which drift in from the newspaper, the picture-house or casual references in speeches or conversation. One must add to

* See on this Mr. C. G. Crump's racy and informative little book called *History and Historical Research* (Routledge & Co.), in which he describes how the subject of study, first carefully chosen by the student, becomes at last a devouring monster, mastering the student.

this what, one is told, is an increasing amount of historical reading, judged by the circulation of libraries, though it is hard to say whether this should be credited to the larger or the smaller class. Clearly, from the point of view of the moral and political effects of history, this third and largest class is the most important, outweighing all the rest. They form the nation, whether it be a democracy or a dictatorship, and it is to them we look for the fruit on a wide scale of the seeds of patriotism devotion, co-operation and endurance which history sows. But one must go further still, especially in days when scientific inventions and mechanical production are steadily reducing the hours of necessary work. From the army of those who until the advent of applied science, were compelled to prolonged and exhausting toil, we may well look in future for strong reinforcements of the intellectual and artistic activities of the race. The scope of the arts is infinite; science is constantly enlarging her vision, and history, by pressing backwards, reveals every day fresh regions for the curiosity and delight of the student. The greater field, and the greater band of possible workers, seem made for one another.

The attitude of a Great Society towards its own past, and the past of the race, is in itself an interesting historical question. It was once different, and differently determined, from what it is now. When the world was young, and communities of men much smaller and more closely knit, the elders of each group would as a matter of duty and immemorial habit, pass on to their juniors the traditions of their tribe. Such teaching of history was narrow and unscientific to the last degree, but it had the right spirit of regarding the matter as part of the fabric of the social being. All the older races of mankind which have succeeded in impressing their work most firmly on the civilization of the world, thus regarded and

propagated their own history. It was thus with the Greeks, the Romans and the Jews, who all lived so long and fruitfully because they lived on history. One of the most urgent tasks of to-day, which will become still more urgent to-morrow, is to do a similar thing in widely differing circumstances. We have no longer the closely knit traditional society, but a community, increasing its links no doubt, but extended in much thinner consistency throughout the world. And the material which was once close compact and never questioned, is now a mass of details which no man can number, with a scope which no one can compass and rest in peace. The heads of families and the leaders of the nation no longer regard it as part of their duty to instruct the rising generation in its antecedents. The preachers do not attempt it, and at best they have but a small section of the public at their feet. The statesman has his new measures to recommend and his opponents to confute. The father of the family must catch his train or look after his motor-car. The need of the instruction, which no one denies, falls on the schools, the public libraries, a few voluntary societies and a wireless organization which struggles bravely with a multitude of topics and of clients, among whom an interest in history is seldom a dominating passion. That, with so great a crowd of conflicting interests—science and sport and contemporary events—offering more thrills than ever, history should grow in its appeal, is the strongest proof of its vitality. Many of the contemporary symptoms, in pageants and films and sensational novels, are superficial and often misleading as to the true import of the history portrayed. But the growth on the surface is a sign of some life within.

The exciting state of the world to-day gives great point to the advocates of the teaching of "contemporary history." The term describes what is strictly speaking an imaginary quantity, for there can be no *contemporary*

history. As soon as we begin to think or speak of an event, it is part of the past, the present being merely that 'irrational' or imaginary 'split' between past and future, which corresponds to Dedekind's "split" between two infinities of number. This, however, is rather a philosophical point, and one understands quite well in a general sense what is meant by 'contemporary history.' It is events still being reported in the newspapers, and therefore events about which the complete, or well considered judgment, of the historian is still impossible. We ought not, however, on that account to rule out contemporary events absolutely from our view or our teaching of history for many good reasons. Two have been already mentioned in these pages. If the approach to history must be through interest, it is absurd to neglect just those events which are arousing the keenest interest. People talk naturally, excitedly and for a time incessantly, about Hitler. Lead them on therefore by their interest in Hitler to think a little about other men who have established themselves as dictators, what events facilitate the rise of a dictator, and whether good or evil has resulted in the past or is likely to result in the future.

The other good reason, already mentioned, relates to the nature of history itself. If the past, which history records, is a living thing, constantly fed by the happenings of the present, we have here again an unanswerable reason for including Hitler. Not to do so, gives colour to the pretence of those who oppose the drawing of lessons from history, or even the teaching of history itself, that it is a dead thing and should be left to bury its dead. The sound reason for the critics of 'contemporary history' is other than this, and deserves the closest attention. It is the danger of misjudging the very recent past, because of passion, and because of the insufficiency of our knowledge. Whatever we may think of it must

be subject to those cautions, and, above all, to the caution that we cannot understand the present without its antecedents. Hitler, Mussolini, any of the dictators of the moment, are there, not only, or even mainly, on account of their personal qualities, but because the society which has accepted them has had a certain history which disposed it in that direction. To understand Hitler we need to understand Germany. Without Hitler the picture of a living Germany would be strangely incomplete. Without the history of Germany, Hitler would be an isolated and inexplicable figure.

We should therefore be friends to the teachers of 'contemporary history', though on our guard against the pitfalls to which it may lead. It is indeed a much more hopeful line of approach than that of presenting the past in false trappings borrowed from the present. We do at least know something of what is going on under our eyes, whereas a sensational film of Henry VIII may falsify everything except the names. And to start from the present and say, "Let us study history backwards," does at least recognize that history is worth studying. For there is another class of open enemies who say, "The less we know about the past the better, except to avoid its errors. Even these need not be carefully studied, for we are conscious of them in all the troubles which beset our lives. Let us build the future to an ideal which resembles the past as little as may be."

This is partly an idle phrase, partly an aspiration, partly an urgent summons to consider carefully the very subject matter of this book. It is an idle phrase, because obviously, for far the larger share of our existence, we have no choice but to follow the plan laid down in the æons of the previous existence of the race. Not only all the more purely animal processes of our nature, but also the main instincts, emotions or urges of our being, act on historical or traditional lines. We eat, drink,

talk, laugh and love as countless generations have done before us. We should do so even if they had warned us against their example, and we had tried to avoid it. For this simple reason the great masterpieces of the past still speak to us most movingly in those parts where their characters act from motives, and in the manner, common to mankind. We admire Helen, we sympathize with Andromache, we grieve with Priam. The revolting or innovating spirit in any age affects at most a small part of man's existence. He lives, works, and on the whole enjoys life, as his historical nature bids him, often in times when the rate of change or the revolutionary spirit are most active. The cry of "Away from the evils of the past," has been sometimes raised most loudly just when those evils were being most rapidly removed. It was so at the French Revolution; it is so at present in the denunciation of the 'capitalist system.' Men see most clearly the need for some reform of the marriage laws when, as now, the general conditions of marriage are most equitable and the married state most enjoyed. In any case the remedies proposed are themselves only a fresh way of applying the ideas or the power of thought derived from the dead. Mme Curie discovers radium, a new fact destined to bring great changes in men's lives and bodies. But the instruments, the methods, the reasoning power by which she reached it were all the result of the secular evolution of the human mind. Even the most original creatures are children of their parents, and the transition from parent to child, from one generation to another, is the general type of the relation which we are seeking between the Old and the New.

It would be interesting to study the relations between Old and New in different countries and different ages in the world's history and estimate the amount of originality introduced into any society at various times. There is always some change even in ages and countries

of the greatest continuity, such as ancient Egypt; otherwise writing could never have begun there, or the religion of Ahknaton. On the other hand there is always large continuity, even in the most rapidly changing societies: otherwise Napoleon would not have found a civil service ready to his hand after the Revolution, or all hope might have gone out of the world with the Great War. The attitude of succeeding generations to their predecessors varies from time to time and from place to place somewhat as does that of children to parents. Just now in both cases the sense of detachment is rather greater and the rate of change a good deal higher than it has been in the past. It is a propitious moment for studying the point. The general position, as between Old and New, at the present time seems to stand out pretty clearly, and may be shortly stated. On the one hand, as we saw, the present is always largely governed by the past, and as the organization of society becomes stronger through the influence of science, which is a collective thing, we may well accept the dictum that the 'living are more and more governed by the dead.' On the other hand, if humanity is to advance, individuals must have freedom, and some historians find the law of progress to consist in the extension of freedom. There is at least an abundance of impulse towards a freer life and free creation in art now observable in all directions, in spite of dictators and the coercion of mechanical civilization. The quality may be doubtful, but of the quantity there can be no dispute. The line of advance lies plain before us between two great governing points, accumulated knowledge and organization on the one hand, and the need for free activity and creation on the other.

This book is written to suggest a line of approach to history which differs somewhat both from that of the historical specialist and from the courses usually prescribed for education. It may appeal to some among the

vague class known as 'general readers,' especially to any among them who try to frame their general reading on a plan and hope by study to strengthen their minds and gain some definite point of view.

History is pre-eminently the field for such a task, but we need, first of all, a clear, connected background. It is suggested that this should be furnished by that forward movement of a definite kind which may be traced through all the elevations and depressions, the détours and the stagnant pools of man's long course. If we call this 'progress,' it is necessary to envisage it in clear conceptions. In the most general and surest terms, it is the growth of humanity, a progressive acting and thinking together for a common end. Acting together, they have measured the stars and encircled the planet. Appreciating one another, they have created the most moving ideals of human excellence and died, not like the beasts in wild fury, but calmly and deliberately for those whom they would not see. This common thinking comes to a climax in the contemporary conception of evolving life.

We shall see in the next chapter how our earliest ancestors pre-figured in many ways the collective efforts by which we in our turn are carrying on their work. They had to rise above the beasts; we have the easier task of rising above ourselves on human steps.

This main thread or background of our study is what has been called the 'unitary' theory of progress and we do not hesitate to oppose it firmly to the views of Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee and others who have been at pains to point out that history consists of the rise and fall of many 'civilizations,' rather than the development of one. Condorcet, and the thinkers of a century or so ago, to whom we owe the first sketch of the 'unitary' view here suggested, worked indeed better than they knew. Their theories need to be corrected and enlarged, but they have been enforced far more than they

have been refuted. An evolutionary biology has given them a wider and stronger basis, and religion, conceived now in relation to life on earth, can only be satisfied by a belief that man is gradually fulfilling a destiny of greater strength, goodness and knowledge.

Here is the background and it will be found to give a colour and connectedness to the incidents which happen on it, whether in the few studies which follow in this book or in the life-long study which might absorb the interest of some 'general readers.' On this background or main thread of human progress there appears a series of brilliant achievements or creations which call for special study. May we not enjoy and dwell on them, while at the same time strengthening our sense of human unity and our hope of progress? For there is sound moral and educational value in the dictum, 'Think only of the past as its remembrance gives you pleasure,' though it would be no guide to the complete and scientific study of history.

We must select in any case; why not, in some cases at least, select those things in history which embody most heroism, most wisdom and the highest sense of beauty in their creators? There is another and stronger social motive for such a course. Outstanding excellence in one's models has the merit of stimulating in those who study them, fresh excellence in other lines. So Dante working on Virgil, and Shelley on the Greek poets and thinkers, became in their turn the pioneers and inspiration of another age.

There can be but few of these jewels on the chain in the pages which follow, but the idea is there. History would bring both more pleasure and profit, if the eye dwelt more on the exquisite art and practical skill of the Egyptian, on the sense of beauty and measure in the Greeks rather than their politics, on the chivalry of the Middle Ages, the exploring heroism of modern men, the

state-building genius of the Englishman, the science and engineering of the nineteenth century. No one in this age need fear to stifle originality by studying the best of the past. The new is always bursting forth and, even in our fits of gloom, will dazzle us sometimes with visions of the future. For reverence and confidence in human nature and for high aspiration, the New does well to keep in touch with the Old.

III

PRIMITIVE AND MODERN

THE suggested plan of study which concluded the last chapter, reminds one rather of the time-charts often used in good history teaching. A straight line represents the flow of time, and is divided into equal portions, for ten years, a century, a millennium, according to the scale adopted. On this line other marks—ticks or crosses—will be added here and there, to recall some special event. These will generally be one of the accepted landmarks which figure in the text-books—a battle, a new king, a famous statute, a great discovery. Now human progress itself might be thought of as the main straight line, and on this might be placed stars for distinguished moments and achievements, and occasional side-tracks leading to forms of civilization akin to the main type but not in the midst of it. This gives a truer picture of the whole than if we think of many, more or less parallel and disconnected streams, drying up, disappearing, appearing again somewhere else, and with a great sandy waste threatening to absorb them all in the distance. This is rather the Spengler-Toynbee picture. Now, just in so far as we incline to the unitary idea of progress—that there is a main stream, common to all men, going on and increasing in volume—so shall we be interested in the discoveries of pre-history. In those ages, which form by far the larger part of man's existence on earth, there can be no question but that a main stream is involved, the main stream of man's rising, by the force of his mind, to a level above and quite distinct from the lower animals.

It was the most fundamental part of the making of Man.

In that time, put now by the experts at many hundreds of thousands of years, the most important factors in man's nature had manifested themselves and begun to do their work. Nay more; if we consider the perils overcome, the social solidity attained, and the exquisite and elaborate character of the art achieved, how can we exclude the men who did these things from the process of 'civilization'? Only indeed by narrowing the definition to those who live in cities. If, as we should, we rather enlarge the boundaries of our thought, we shall find reason to agree with William James. "Bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, are those half-brutish prehistoric brothers . . . and thanks to them the torch of life now lights the world for us. Small indeed seem individual distinctions when we look back on these overwhelming numbers of human beings, panting and straining under the pressure of that vital want. . . . We grow humble and reverent as we contemplate the prodigious spectacle."

It is not within the scope of this chapter, and it would confuse the general impression, to attempt to sketch any of the stages of this prehistoric growth. They may be found well set out in an increasing number both of popular and learned books. What is interesting to the student of general history, is to consider how this vast extension of territory affects the lay-out of his original and much smaller domain, what are the common lines of direction, how must he alter his principles of division?

He must, in the first place, admit fully the new idea that human history is linked up, as an integral part, with the science of all life. Man is the crown of living things, not in the old sense of having them placed below him for his enjoyment and command, but in the more intimate sense of belonging to them, and being the highest known manifestation of those principles and qualities which all in some degree possess. William James sees

that point in his 'pressure of that vital want,' and Bergson in his famous 'élan vital.' It involves, one need hardly say, no abandonment of specific human qualities, but only the recognition that they appear, evolving in time, from something lower which is not human. The difference may be greater, but it is the same in kind as that which separates other degrees in an ascending scale of living. So, in the human scale, when may we say that man is 'civilized,' or an individual 'unselfish' or 'truly religious'?

In one way it is much easier to draw the dividing line between the human and the sub-human that is approaching him. All life has both its physical and its mental aspect, and it becomes human at the point at which the mental has so far outstript the physical as to be clearly the purpose and explanatory factor of the whole. At the lowest end of the biological scale one asks with some doubt "Must we then assume even here some mental factor analogous to our own?" At the other end, ourselves, we think rather of the body as a condition of the mind; it is, 'the mind and its body,' instead of the body with a mental aspect. Man has arrived, when, in the Universe, mind is clearly dominant over matter.

The study of pre-history will therefore increase the psychological interest of history. Already professors of anthropology, like Dr. Marett, rejoice when they can trace in early remains an evidence of the growth of soul. The search and the discovery will advance apace; and in these early stages we have the solid advantage of being compelled to see the forest for want of knowing the individual trees. Here there are no intricacies and vagaries of an individual soul, which a Ludwig or a Lytton Strachey may weave into a romance. The soul which is advancing is social. If, as it must have been, some individual genius first laid an arrow on a bow, we know nothing of him. What stands out in

the remains is the general prevalence of certain weapons, with a certain type of man living in certain general conditions. There was conflict with lower animals, physically stronger, mentally less advanced; and the fight was won by a creature, dependent from the first on superior sight and wits and the intelligent co-operation of his fellows.

The reaction of pre-history in this direction will be doubly wholesome, both on history and on psychology. For in both these studies there has been a tendency, inspired by an age of excessive individualism, to exaggerate the importance both of the 'great man' in history, and of the pettinesses of the man within. The long and true story of man's ascent corrects all this. No doubt, then as now, there were large differences between men. In bodily strength and authority there would be more, though in knowledge and mental scope there must have been much less. But whatever they were, the great men of those unnumbered ages had no bards to pile up and perpetuate their praises. Their work now stands out, as it was essentially, a social one, consisting in building up a new and distinct species or order of beings, bound together and acting together from generation to generation on a spiritual basis. This is the achievement which has taken place before we first meet with historical records, say five millennia B.C. It occupies therefore by far the largest part of the existence of Man, with ample time to exhibit and to stamp his characteristics for the present and far into the future.

Nowhere else in our studies shall we find the relation and the contrasts between Old and New more fascinating than here. On the whole the spread of knowledge and closer thinking on the known facts have led to a recognition of greater similarity between our earlier ancestors and ourselves than was at first believed. Sir James Frazer, for instance, maintained the sharpest distinction

between magic and religion. Later opinion is more inclined to dwell on the identity of their common root than on the differences in their application. M. Lévy Bruhl had published a book on the illogicality or prelogicality of the savage mind. In 1931 at Oxford he withdrew the supposed implication and referred his hearers to the fundamental continuity of human thinking. There was no impassable barrier between primitive and civilized mentality. "If, on the contrary," he said, "we admit the identity of the fundamental structure of the mind in all men, we are able with some hope of success to press our investigations into the special characteristics of the primitive mind." On a background, that is, of common rationality we are better able to discern the differences than if we were confronted with an object of study entirely different. So in studying the heavens astronomers have been helped by the discovery that the constitution of matter is everywhere fundamentally the same; on that background they discern new elements, and are able to put in their right place facts previously unknown or wrongly or imperfectly explained.

A mind, therefore, similar to our own, and growing by exercise in co-operation with others; this is the fundamental fact at the basis of man's ascent from lower life. And the success of this ascent is the strongest and final proof of the rightness of his reason. One is struck, and amused, in accounts of savage life at the childish irrationality of much of their practice and belief. The Australian blackman will smear his limbs with ochre, because ochre is red like blood and must have some of the virtue of blood which it will transfer to his limbs. Another will slaughter a lamb over a new-sown crop in order to give richness or blessing to the harvest. These, and similar irrationalities, fill the pages of many works on anthropology, just as the aberrations of the public to-day—happily a smaller proportion—fill the pages of the

popular press. The savage would not have survived had his thinking been predominantly of that type. At the same time that he was smearing his limbs with red ochre he was fighting the mammoth and the cave-bear with accurate and well-tested knowledge of their character and habits and with devices of proved efficiency. It is the pragmatic test. His observation, his inference, his weapons and his pluck must have been true to the mark, for were they not, he would have perished and we with him.

One must distinguish between this irrationality and complete madness. If a man thinks he is Napoleon or Genghis Khan and proceeds to act as such, we lock him up as a danger to his neighbours. If the occasional mad primitive rushed on the mammoth with naked arms, he perished and there was an end of him. But the man who reasoned about the ochre had some reason on his side. He had noticed the common redness of ochre and blood but he did not complete his diagnosis. He had even another element of rightness on his side, for the smearing with ochre had undoubtedly a psychological effect. He felt and fought much better for it, and would not otherwise have kept up the practice. Where the general life of a society is vigorous and successful, it can carry a considerable mass of irrational or obstructive reasoning. It will even use its superstitions as food for its courage and fuel for its pride. Englishmen and all other successful nations have done it with general applause for generations. But where the necessities of life are obstructed by such beliefs or practices, the society, or the animal, may be dragged down by its burden and die like the plesiosaurus. Human examples of such extinction are also by no means wanting.

There are other good reasons why these early stretches of man's existence should be included in our conception of his history, other points in which they throw light,

on his later development, sometimes by contrast, oftener by similarity of principle. They are really subordinate to the main line, a life of the spirit, constantly pressing forward, on the one hand, by gaining more complete control of its surroundings by studying their laws; on the other, by attaining a fuller and deeper sense of community with all types of sentient being, culminating in human consciousness. One interesting point of contact which goes to the root of the matter, has been worked out in an imaginative way by Mr. Gerald Heard.* As the community sense grows with more highly developed men, they seem to return at a higher level to that state of oneness with others which is so notable a feature of the tribe. If we imagine the line of progress as a spiral, one might say that, having swung round through a curve of excessive individualism, man was returning to his original and proper direction and was now able to look straight down into those simpler souls, which gave the first sketch of this essential quality. It is an engaging fancy, with a valuable lesson. But it should not be pressed too far. Individualism, in the sense of a system or way of life which rests on freedom and encourages the fullest growth and exercise of individual powers, is not superseded in the modern world. The truth there is in socialism, the good which the new internationalism aims at, must be added to freedom and not gained by sacrificing it. How difficult the task is, appears from the efforts put forth by all good teachers to stimulate the individuality of their scholars, constricted by the weight of numbers and by regulations devised in the interests of some common denominator. There is a danger in the mass-psychology which threatens the finer traits of the individualism of the past. To keep and develop these, while strengthening the sense of oneness of which the primitive community

* The Ascent of Humanity.

was a type, will tax all the wisdom of teachers and statesmen in the future.

At the moment it is of the first importance to inculcate the common interests of the world. For this, the study of primitive man is an excellent discipline. For him, the enemy was clearly the non-human, whether the dangers of nature or the ravages of the beasts. Above all, he had to combine with man and make the human prevail. And the similarity of his methods and instruments throughout the world is good medicine for those deafen us with their shouts of " all for the nation and nothing for mankind." The needs of primitive man, and his means of meeting them, were the same everywhere and on this primitive substructure, carefully and painfully laid in countless ages, the nature, the strength and fortunes of us all are built, Aryans and Hottentots, Jews and Gentiles, Hindu and Moslem, Russians and Japanese.

Besides this impulse to a sane internationalism, the study of the primitive has another lesson, equally timely and equally needed as an element in the full conception of history. The primitive man conquered and rose by his wits, and these wits were used, as they must always be in the first instance, in warding off enemies and gaining food and protection for himself, his mates and his offspring. How he did this is part of the ' history of inventions,' which has been suggested as the best definition of history as a whole. His invention of things useful in these necessary tasks went on from the beginning, side by side with his observation of the way things worked and moved around him. It is impossible to give the first place to either aspect, science or practice. They are correlative, as Homo Faber and Homo Sapiens with the primitive are one. He began with invention, more clearly than he began with speech. For speech, apart from merely inarticulate cries, implies a degree of general-

ization, whereas invention is particular, based on the observation of the suitability of a particular change in some external thing to serve a particular need. The ape, like the man, may use a stone to break a nut, or pile up boxes in his cage to reach the top. But only the man has chipped the stone, to make it by the change more suitable as a cutting, scraping or piercing tool. Only the man put the stone in a sling and was able, by bringing the two things together, and extending the propulsive powers of his body, to send it further and with more force. Changing the form of external objects to suit a particular end thought of beforehand, or bringing two or more external objects together for such an end, are marks of invention.

The 'invention' of fire is strictly analogous. Man and beast had observed fire in common for ages, in lightning, volcanoes and other natural forms. Man and beast had appreciated differences of temperature, and sought or avoided the sun or other sources of heat as need impelled. The inventive, or human, stage arrived when man used for his own ends a fire derived from nature, and found a way to start a fire where there was none before. This is a deliberate, contrived alteration in the workings of nature. What else, in essence, has he done with steam or electricity or the Hertzian waves?

Let us take for a moment this side of history, which has seemed to many good judges so important as to be supreme, the history of inventions. Tracing the development of any given thing in time involves two aspects. On the one side there is the identity of the thing, persisting throughout; for the child, the plant, the animal which we are studying, has not disappeared and we are studying one thing and not many. On the other side, are the differences, and we are interested to see how far a thing may be changed, elaborated and adapted,

and yet remain the same. What are these two aspects in the case of inventions, seen through the ages? The common, identical thing is the forward throw of the mind, making some alteration in the existing order for an end which the inventing mind has conceived beforehand. This mental or spiritual element is common and continuous throughout man's evolution, and makes the study of such deep significance. We see, through this line of approach, the primitive pre-historic man as one with us, whatever his bestial appearance or his low habits of living have been. The differences are subordinate and can be more easily estimated when one has grasped the essential identity. The discovery of Hertzian waves, and their application in the invention of wireless in our time, are differentiated from the inventions of primitive men by the fact that the natural forces involved were much more obscure in their working than the making of a fire. Fire leapt to the eye in volcano or lightning. Ages elapsed before the enquiring mind could penetrate to radio-activity and codify the rules of its working. But it is in itself as real and permanent a working of natural forces as the mind is real, permanent and progressive which discovers and codifies the rules. The codification is science, and we add the word 'progressive' to the description of mind, primarily because the human mind has shown itself able to effect that codification, and, by the use of it, has extended the dominion of man over external nature. Other sides of man's spiritual growth will find their place in later chapters. This side—his effect on nature and the elaboration of that effect by science—is so striking and continuous that it comes first in the tests of progress, and goes back clearly to those qualities which enabled him, in the dawn, to rise above his neighbours.

The effect of the new knowledge and appreciation of

the primitive man is just as far-reaching in race-politics as it has been shown to be in the study of history. No contrast in human relations is greater than that between the present accepted treatment of backward peoples in Native Protectorates, Reserves and the like, and the attitude, only four hundred years since, of the conquerors of Mexico and Peru or, less than two hundred years ago, of the white settlers in Australia and Tasmania. There were mixed motives among those invading whites, predominately a desire for money-making, sometimes a curiosity about the strange creatures they met, occasionally a sense of pity, and, especially with the Spaniards, a passion for saving souls by force. But there was never the saving knowledge which would have enabled the stronger invader to appreciate his kinship and his debt. The weaker and less developed people whom they met, seemed curious freaks, often less than human, never the repositories of earlier life, kindred representatives of the force which had now grown so great as to be able to trample its ancestors in the dust. The change of view came gradually and not at first through science. Sympathy and pity came first, supported by the religious view that all were children of the same God who had created them and willed that the stronger should act as elder brothers and protectors of the weak. It was this feeling which inspired the humanitarian campaign of the eighteenth century and culminated in Burke's famous attack on the misgovernment of India. The nineteenth century carried it further, and established it on a scientific basis, by showing that these backward people were in fact one with their conquerors. Sometimes, as in India, they had advanced from a common stock on other lines; sometimes, as in Africa, they were retarded by their conditions of life and so preserved more primitive features.

The scientific impulse once aroused grew rapidly, and found assistance and confirmation from other branches

of science, especially geology, which revealed remains and tools of the extinct races, corresponding in surprising detail with the artefacts of the surviving peoples. Perhaps the most suggestive of all the discoveries was that of the extreme fineness and truth to life of the presentment of living creatures by the artists of prehistoric times, such as those who painted the chase of reindeer or mammoth in the caves of Spain or southern France, or modelled the female figures found in many places. All such presentments had no doubt some religious purpose.

It now appears that one may—surveying the scene from the widest angle—distinguish three main stages in the progress of the primitive man. In the first, the earliest man, having to secure his footing on the earth in face of constant and insistent dangers from other creatures, develops weapons of attack and places of refuge, makes use of fire and elaborates speech. In the second, having made good his position and consolidated the species, he has some time for reflection, and employs it first on the features of things round him and the forces which control his life. From this thought come the rudiments of religion, and the artistic objects bound up with it. Art thus becomes the salient characteristic of the Palæolithic man. In the third stage, which merges gradually into the period we are accustomed to call 'civilized', the art of presentment fades for a time into the background, and man's chief energies are occupied with arts of another kind. Crops are cultivated, animals are tamed, buildings are erected and tools are perfected at first in the stone of which the marvellous finish marks the Neolithic Age, then in the metals of which the discovery and increasing use form the surest material test of 'civilization.'

The intense and growing interest which all these things have aroused, was noticed in the first chapter But it was not there pointed out—what is obvious

enough—that the study turns mainly on the external aspects of the objects discovered. It is necessarily and rightly so in the first instance. The shape, material, finish and use of the implements and other remains are studied with minute attention, and comparisons set up between those of one place and another. But we have still to approach the underlying and decisive question of the kind of mind which was at work in the beings who made them. How did it compare with our own, how far did it arise from common ideas shared by generations of men living, working and suffering together, what notions had they about the world in which they lived? This is the social psychology which looms constantly larger in our view of 'contemporary history,' and it must be pushed back to bring in sight the early history of that collective being which arises from the concord of individuals and stands between the individual and the material world. In all ages it is the state of mind, i.e. the state of mind of men thinking and acting together, which matters supremely, as a glance at the troubled Europe of to-day is enough to convince us. The next chapter will take up the discussion of this moral issue at a later and clearly marked stage, but this one should end by pointing out, as clearly as possible, the essential common elements on the religious as well as moral side which link up the primitive with the modern.

On no side of his nature does man seem in his highest flights to differ more widely from his starting point than in religion. At the one end the grossest superstition, the belief, for instance, that some black stone has power to save from death or give fertility to wives or crops: at the other, the vision of a Plotinus transcending time and space. Yet at every stage and in every form of religion, as we trace them historically backwards, we find two inseparable elements, from the fusion of which a religion arises. On the one hand, looking outwards,

there is an apprehension of a certain order and power in external things, or in the Universe as a whole, quite independent of the mind which apprehends. On the other hand, in every religion there is, acknowledged or implicit, some agreement with other human minds, some duty to be performed by which others benefit or in which they take part. As time has gone on and morality improved, while the former external element has never disappeared, the latter or social side has become more and more prominent. To some thinkers indeed it has seemed to occupy the whole field, so that 'morality tinged by emotion' was put forward by Matthew Arnold as a possible definition of religion.

The discussion of such questions does not fall within the scope, either of this chapter or of this book. But it is germane to our purpose to notice the continuity of the elements of religion from the primitive to the modern, and also that the two elements in religion correspond to the two aspects of the working of the human mind in its advance. We noted them in the first suggested definition of progress—the mind working outward and making science, the mind working inwards with other minds and giving us social being, real, compact and continuous in time and space. Religion would seem to be the same fundamental factors raised to a higher power; and the primitive lives in us still, transformed but indestructible.

IV

THE DAWN OF CONSCIENCE

THE strands of human progress, like some ocean cable, come into the light of history some five or six millennia B.C. Before that time we have to trace them by indirect means in the depths of time. From then onwards, we have the actual records of men's thoughts in their written words, and the part of the earth's surface where they have most to tell us, and where they have been most fnlly deciphered, is what is called the Near East, the lands lying between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. There are in that region two river-valleys which have many features in common. One is the valley of the Nile; the other the lower basin of the Euphrates and the Tigris. To-day the latter rivers join before they reach the sea, but in earlier times they entered the sea apart, and the plain between them was the home of the other pre-historic civilization which can dispute with Egypt the primacy of the world. Here, in the southern portion of the plain, lived the Sumerians who for ages had been draining and cultivating the rich soil which the rivers had deposited on their way to the sea. It was an environment closely similar to that of the Nile, though not protected from attack so well as that is. In both places the inhabitants had learned to control the flow of the rivers with dykes and to irrigate their land by trenches. In both places the harvests were rich; oxen drew the ploughs, and goats, sheep and donkeys were tamed and used. In both places horses were unknown, but the wheel was employed for moving things about, and was probably first invented by the Sumerians. Many of their inventions were extremely ingenious and

their arts and ways of life, known to us by wall-engravings and pictures, denote, especially in Egypt, a high degree of refinement. Thousands of years of learning and practice lie behind all this, but it comes into the light of history through the capital invention of writing, which becomes known to us, curiously enough, from about the date which Archbishop Usher fixed for the Creation of the World.

Now writing, like other things, was a matter of slow growth and evolution and may have been arrived at in some form in other places than the valley of the Nile and Mesopotamia. It seems indeed to be implicit in the first pictorial drawings in the caves, for these were a means of conveying something in the artist's mind to other eyes and minds; which is precisely the purpose of writing. But writing, in the ordinary sense, only began when the pictorial signs from which it arose, had become attached to certain sounds and lost their pictorial significance. This process we can actually trace in the documents surviving from the two famous river basins; hence their unique importance. For, when the signs were once generalized, and used as parts of words to convey thoughts from man to man, not only was communication and concerted action far easier among the living, but the dead lived on in their most vital part—the expression of their thought. It is the interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics and Babylonian cuneiform in the nineteenth century which enabled the frontiers of written history to be pushed so much further back. Some of the more far-reaching discoveries in the evolution of thought which have resulted, will be noticed in this chapter. It is equally fascinating, and almost as important as a lesson in human growth, to follow, as we may, the evolution of the instrument itself. It began with rude pictures scratched in soft clay with the end of a reed. This was

the Sumerian method leading to cuneiform. Trade, and the needs of the government of a large, settled and prosperous community, made communications necessary. The communications facilitated trade and government, and were in turn polished and quickened by use. So writing was developed by combined thought and practice till the chain was forged which goes unbroken and in widening coils from the clay tablets of Babylon to the New Oxford Dictionary.

The decipherment of the two ancient scripts—cuneiform and hieroglyphics—which contain the written thought of the two first great centres of civilization, is itself a story of unsurpassed persistence, ingenuity and national co-operation. They fell into disuse with the spread of Greek in the ancient world, and it does not appear that any Greek could read them, though the Greeks noticed with a passing interest the picture writing of Egypt. It was left for the modern world, when science had re-awakened and sharpened the intellectual faculties, to carry out the restoration, and provide one of the most potent links between Old and New that we now possess. Cuneiform, which was the popular means of communication in the Near East for thousands of years, was the first to come under the scrutiny of Western scholars. The great rock inscriptions of Persia had been noticed by travellers from the seventeenth century onwards. The older Niebuhr, traveller, mathematician and scholar, had between 1766 and 1777 made a first classification of the texts which he had himself transcribed at Persepolis. He transcribed and arranged them and decided that the signs were alphabetic, but never arrived at the interpretation of one of them. This was done by nineteenth century scholars, among whom three stand out for special mention—Grotefend, Burnouf and Rawlinson, a German, a Frenchman and an Englishman, co-operating, as the

leading nations of the West should co-operate, on a task which involved the origin and thought of all.

It was found that a common script was used by various distinct languages. Persian, Susian and Babylonian were the three tongues of the texts first transcribed at Persepolis. The origin of this script is now traced to the early Sumerian settlers at the mouth of the rivers, and the clue which put the decipherers on their track, was the frequent repetition of the same signs which they guessed to be names of royal personages whose lives and exploits were commemorated. Darius, Hytaspes and Xerxes—household words to the Greeks —thus came to life again in the modern world as a key to the oldest civilization in the Near East.

The interpretation of the Egyptian language and writing presents a curiously similar story. Again, as in Persia, the first attempts were made in the seventeenth century. Again it was an inscription on stone which gave the clue. Again the three great Western nations co-operated in the result, and in this case the leading honours fall to the French. The Rosetta stone was discovered by the French engineers in Napoleon's expedition of 1799. It also has three synonymous inscriptions, this time in hieroglyphic, demotic (the later cursive style of hieroglyphic) and Greek. Again it proved to be an honorific decree, put out by the Egyptian priests for Ptolemy V and his wife Cleopatra. Unfortunately the hieroglyphic portion was largely broken away and years of minute work were necessary to collate the fragments with others until complete. Thomas Young, a famous discoverer in the realm of optics and the anatomy of the eye, was the first interpreter of the demotic script and the first compiler of an Egyptian vocabulary. But he had not succeeded, before he died in 1829, in assigning the sounds to the words, or even in breaking up most of the hieroglyphics into

words. This was done by the true father of Egyptology, Champollion, who in a short life of intense study covered the whole field. He died in 1832, and an army of followers, French, German, English and now American, have made Egyptology the most fruitful field of early history.

What has chiefly to be said in this chapter relates to Egypt, and has been made possible by the interpretation of their written thoughts in the nineteenth century. We must leave untouched the recent discoveries of Mr. Woolly and others in the upper Mesopotamia region. Here the spade has uncovered artistic remains as interesting and as finely wrought as the contemporary work of Egypt. Here also we are in a period of some four millennia before Christ, and in a land, Babylonia, with Assyria, which made frequent contacts with Egypt over the Bible lands of Palestine. To us who have inherited the Jewish, as well as the Greco-Roman, tradition, this contact through the Jews as well as through the Greeks, gives both Babylonian and Egyptian thought a special interest and a special nearness. We belong in mind to them at least as much as we belong to our more northern forbears—'Aryan' or other. It will be seen that Egyptian thought, now revealed in growing abundance, throws a new flood of light on some of the most familiar commonplaces of our training and our practice. What we had always thought old becomes still older, and we find a new setting for ourselves in the strand of progress.

We saw that cuneiform, the Babylonian script, was the popular medium for several millennia in the Near East. This was due to their business aptitude; "no other people being so perpetually devoted to the acquisition of shekels." Business and government carried their clay tablets over Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine and far into Egypt long before the code of Hammurabi in 2200 B.C. The Jewish scriptures which

bear evidence of both influences, Babylonian and Egyptian, have the former more fully in the earlier portions, and the second in the later. We shall see this as we proceed. The deluge story comes from Babylonia, where wider overflows of the rivers were possible than in Egypt. The sabbath also and other, more external and legal, aspects of their life and religion came to the Jews from their north-eastern relatives. Egypt was their more spiritual home.

Now Egypt, as we saw, is better protected from external attack than the lands of the sister-civilization in Mesopotamia. The Nile flows in its lower course along a valley, wide enough for ample settlement and cultivation, but shut in by fairly high cliffs and hills, flanked themselves on both sides by stretches of desert sand. Here a rich civilization, a typical theocracy, a seed-bed of the arts, sciences and morality, was able to develop with less disturbance and more fruitful results than anywhere else on earth. The labours of the Egyptologists have now carried back our knowledge of life in the Nile valley to early pre-historic times. We can trace here as elsewhere the rude beginnings with stone and cave; but the supreme importance of Egypt does not lie in these, but in the fact that, owing to its long settled development on a considerable scale, men were able to work out, in art and building, and think out, in moral reflections and the rudiments of science, things that impressed for all time the minds of other men. The pyramid is an apt symbol of the permanence of their work, and was admired by the Greek tourist as it is by us. To the Greeks too the 'wisdom of the Egyptians' was a thing of primeval awe, but his respect was not allied with sufficient patience or curiosity about the languages of other people to lead him to decipher their writing or analyse their thought. Nor had the Greeks the religious link with Egypt which

has so strongly stimulated the curiosity of the modern Christian world. It amused the vanity of Alexander the Great, and increased his prestige, to journey to the oasis of Ammon and have himself identified with the Sun-God: it was a late and half humorous fancy. But the Christian faith, derived from Palestine and the Jews, had an intimate and fundamental interest in knowing the relationship and debt of the Jewish faith to both its great neighbours. It is now known that Palestine was an Egyptian province before its occupation by the Jewish kingdom. The ancient tradition of the Exodus, the wanderings in the wilderness, the revelation on Sinai, the very name of Moses, have all gained fresh meaning by the unravelment of Egyptian writing. Egyptian elements also appear abundantly in Jewish scriptures. It must suffice, in the rest of this chapter, to follow briefly one line of thought which has recently been illustrated in striking detail by Dr. J. H. Breasted.

The religion of ancient Egypt was a highly developed theocracy. From among the multitude of local and nature deities with which the country teemed, the Sun-God in various aspects arose supreme, as the government became settled, and when the Pharaoh combined, as he did before 4000 B.C., the rule of Upper and Lower Egypt. The Pharaoh was the Sun-God, appearing in human form, and all the elaborate apparatus of temples, priesthoods, sacrifices and pyramid tombs is inspired by this thought. Through this belief, accepted without question by the millions of the population, it was possible to preserve the co-operation and obedience of all, to have colossal buildings of a religious significance erected, and, above all, to maintain the priesthood, a body of men living on the work of others, but enabled by this provided leisure to think in peace. They became, as in Judæa, as in Spain, as in Geneva or in Rome, a power often unduly weighty in political

affairs, but in this early stage indispensable, if men were to advance from practice to theory and hand on their theories as a sacred trust to their successors. To the Greeks, who were by no means priest-ridden, the wisdom of the Egyptians was the wisdom of the priests.

It is mainly to the priests that we owe the theorizing about conduct, trial and judgment after death, as well as the nature of the Gods and Pharaohs, which appear in these early documents, of which some are dated at about 4000 B.C. No doubt one must often discount the eulogy applied to a ruler or powerful man whose tomb contains the praise. No doubt also it would be a fallacy to treat as common doctrines what will often be the musing of a solitary man, remote from major cares or crimes. But, with all due deductions, an advance of thought in Egypt must now be admitted, which had not been dreamt of before the papyri began to reveal their secrets. The frontiers of religious and moral thought have been thrust back for at least two thousand years, just as the marble columns at Saqqara appear to anticipate the Greeks by even more.

The story is clear in its main outlines. Egypt had been the suzerain power for some centuries before the establishment of the Jewish kingdom. It was in the time of their might that the events took place which are represented in the Jewish tradition by the books of Moses. By this connexion Egyptian ideas were absorbed by the priests and prophets of Israel. After a troubled existence of some five hundred years the Jewish kingdom finally succumbed to attacks from the North East about 600 B.C., and a large number of the inhabitants were transported to Babylon from which they were restored under Cyrus in the middle of the sixth century. They then settled down to consolidate their traditions and religion under a theocracy which

existed, with Persian, Greek and Roman masters, until the destruction of the Temple by Titus in A.D. 69. The Jews, being thus constantly harassed and unstable in their political life, were driven in upon themselves, and the various religious and moral ideas which they had absorbed in their wanderings and troubles, were melted down and forged by their religious teachers into the most solid and enduring creation of the kind which the world has ever seen. The alchemy of suffering turned what they had learned into gold. What happened to the Law and the Prophets when Jerusalem fell, belongs to another story, but the decipherment of Egyptian monuments and papyri has thrown some light on one large source of the Jewish lore. If correctly interpreted, we must perforce accept the result. Nor, surely, need we lament the conclusion, if thoughts about life and moral judgments, kindly ideas, as well as strict rules of conduct, are found to have been current in the world much earlier than we had believed.

The student of Egyptian things is inclined to claim an exclusive property for these discoveries of thought for his Egyptians. About this we may be content to hold a suspended judgment. Where matters so obvious as the need of justice in a ruler are in question, it may well be that others even earlier than the Egyptian scribe had hit on the idea. What is certain, and sufficiently interesting in itself, is, that we find in Egyptian scripts statements of a spiritual and moral bearing earlier than anywhere else in the world, some two thousand years earlier than the Greek or Jewish utterances which had before held an undisputed priority.

In the earliest of these Egyptian inscriptions, dating from the middle of the fourth millennium B.C., we find the god Ptah of Memphis assuming the rôle of the Sun-Gods Re and Atum of Heliopolis, and using language of a striking spirituality. The occasion is the

union of the Lower with Upper Egypt by Menes. Memphis became the capital of the united kingdom, lying midway between its two parts. Ptah, as the god of Memphis, absorbs the functions of the older deities of Heliopolis. This is the common political form; religion follows the flag. But when we find Ptah speaking as "he that pronounced the names of all things, created the sight of the eyes . . . and the tongue, which announces the thought of the heart," we feel that we are in a region nearer to the Logos of the Greeks than to the animal-headed deities of the Nile. The script goes on to ascribe to this divine word, "which the heart thought and the tongue commanded," all the functions of government and all the nutrition of the people. "Thus are carried on every work and craft, according to this command which the heart thinks, which has come forth from the tongue, and which makes the worth of everything." And this "worth of everything" has a social basis, for, "As for him who does what is loved and him who does what is hated, life is given to the peaceful and death is given to the criminal."

This is the earliest written moral maxim in the world, and it has been deciphered from a black stone now in the British Museum and defaced by long usage as a millstone. When we come into the next millennium, after the building of the Great Pyramids, in what is still called the Pyramid Age, the documents are much more abundant and the wisdom more mature, if not more spiritual. By the twenty-eighth century B.C. the title of 'Doer of Righteousness', or *Maat*, has become an accustomed addition to the titles of the Pharaoh. Such titles may be empty enough when they become attached to a royal name. But the thinking out of the idea of 'Maat', as the characteristic virtue of a ruler, is the notable event, and a happy chance has preserved

for us in full the Maxims of the Grand Vizier of the first Pharaoh who thus attached it. This was Ptahhotep, who lived to the age of one hundred and ten years in the twenty-seventh century B.C. He made a collection of moral and official maxims for his son who was to succeed him, and concluded these with the same words which had become an official title for the Pharaoh . . . "I did righteousness."

But this roll—the earliest moral code extant—does not contain only official counsels and generalities. It is full of charming and kindly details. "Take counsel with the unlearned as with the learned. . . . Worthy speech is more hidden than greenstone, being found even among slave-women at the millstone. . . . Let thy face be cheerful as long as thou livest. . . . Love thy wife in the house as is fitting. . . . Make her heart glad as long as thou livest. . . . Fill her body and clothe her back. . . . Separate not thy affection from thy son whom thy ka* has begotten for thee. . . . Be not avaricious towards thy own kin. . . . Withhold thee from all evil and beware of avarice."

One reads all this with the tomb-pictures of old Egypt in one's mind, in which one may see the contemporary pictorial record of happy family relations. It is convincing corroboration of the habitual kindliness, the stability of the family, and its worth as a primary school of morals. The lord of the manor has his wife and child beside him as he pushes out in a reed boat among the marshes, while the child leans over to pluck the lilies. Or he runs along beside his father with a tiny bird in his hand or plays at ball in the garden, or splashes about in the garden pool.

The details are good and concrete and confirm the written maxims. But it is when we come to the wider

* Ka, the protecting guardian spirit which always accompanies the man, within him.

thought which governs the whole, that the mind travels down the centuries to the later scriptures which have made the same ideas authoritative for half the world.

" Precious to a man is the virtue of his son and good character is a thing remembered. . . . Established is the man whose standard is righteousness, who walketh according to its way. . . . The memory thereof shall not vanish from the mouths of men."

This old Kingdom in Egypt, the Age of the Pyramids, becomes the more imposing in history, the more its remains are explored. It was the age of the first scientific medical treatise known to us, which is probably earlier than Ptahhotep, somewhere between 3000 B.C. and the twenty-seventh century. It is the age too of the first monumental portrait sculpture, such as the magnificent head of King Khafre, the builder of the second pyramid of Gizeh in the twenty-ninth century. Yet above all these things must be put the growth of the mind itself, especially as shown in the attainment of abstract ideas such as that of Maat, or righteousness, attached to the Pharaoh and cherished as his highest honour by the Grand Vizier. It was only possible in a large society with a long tradition, and as Egypt had attained this, and personified it in her divine ruler, Maat became in due course a goddess herself, the Sun-God Pharaoh's daughter. It was her image still floating in the back of the prophet's mind which led Malachi, two thousand years later, to write " Unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Excavators at Samaria have discovered ivory plaques, executed by Hebrew workmen, on which these winged figures appear, Egyptian symbols of the Sun-God's righteousness, familiar objects on Hebrew chairs.

The Old Kingdom passed away, and a feudal age followed, of which the disorders and misery find echoes

in papyri writings of that date. In some of them there is a striking forecast of the denunciations of their own sovereigns by Hebrew prophets. "It is strife which thou puttest in the land," says one of the Egyptian writers. "Thou hast spoken unrighteousness, though Royal Command, Knowledge and Righteousness (Maat) are with thee. . . . Where does he sleep (the ideal king)? Behold, his might is not seen." "Righteousness shall return to its place," says another, "unrighteousness shall be cast out."

When we reflect that such ideas and images had the fullest currency in Phœnicia and Palestine hundreds of years before the Hebrew prophets, it is impossible to doubt that they formed a large part of the Messianic and social gospel which has come down to us in the Old Testament.

As time goes on, the analogies become more complete. The famous Ikhnaton, with his new religion, belongs to the New Kingdom, and his Hymn to the Sun-God, which has been so often printed as to become part of the world's classics, dates from soon after 1400 B.C.

But it was already known to us in the Hundred and Fourth Psalm. Ikhnaton's hymn is longer, and has many local references to Egypt. But the general ideas are so much alike, that one is bound to think of a direct connexion.

"How manifold are thy works!"
"They are hidden before men."
"O sole God, beside whom there is no other."
"Thou didst create the earth according to thy heart."

That is Ikhnaton.

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works!"
"In wisdom hast thou made them all."

That is the Psalmist.

At the last stage, before the moral leadership of the world passed to Greece and Israel, in the last millennium B.C., comes a very striking verbal coincidence. In the tenth century B.C. an Egyptian sage called Amenemope, wrote a systematic moral and religious treatise for the guidance of his son, as Ptahhotep had done nearly two thousand years before. Amenemope's is longer, the most elaborate thing of the kind before the Greeks; and it has the extraordinary interest for readers of the Bible, that it was translated into Hebrew and transferred in large portions by the Hebrew writers into their own scriptures. Some of it is found in the book of Jeremiah, but still more in the book of Proverbs, where certain passages, which were obscure in the Hebrew, can now be corrected by the Egyptian original. It is not necessary here to give the parallels; but Amenemope's best sayings throw a pleasing light on the wisdom of the Egyptians.

Better is a bushel which God giveth to thee,
Than five thousand gained by transgression.

Take not gifts from the strong.
Neither shalt thou oppress for him the weak.

God hateth the man of false speech,
And his chief abomination is the double-minded.

Remove not the landmark on the boundary of the field,
And trespass not on the boundary of the widow.

If riches be brought to thee by robbery,
They will not abide the night with thee.
When the morning cometh, they are no longer in thy house.

They have made themselves wings like geese,
And they have flown to heaven.

Better are loaves when the heart is joyous,
Than riches in unhappiness.

N.B.—It will be noticed that I have followed Dr. Breasted's conclusions above. A careful examination of the Amenemope document, suggesting other possible explanations in that case, is made in Oesterley's *Wisdom of Egypt*. (S.P.C.K.). F.S.M.

V

THE GREEK MIRACLE IN POETRY

THE last chapter dealt with developments of thought in long epochs culminating in the last millennium B.C. At best we know little of those distant times and in a few pages only a hint and an illustration could be given here and there. But the impression one gains in the twilight is of a slow but steady progress—a movement, so to say, according to programme. Beautiful as are the artistic products of Ur and ancient Egypt, we can imagine the process of their perfection. Ingenious as are the hieroglyphics and the cuneiform of Babylonia, we can actually trace their earlier stages and appreciate the underlying thought. And it is so also in the steady evolution of their governmental and religious systems. Nature gods coalesce into greater deities, and the ruler comes to stand before his people as the personification of the highest and the strongest, securing the good of all. But in that last millennium B.C. an unexampled movement took place in that slow-moving current. It was mainly connected with one people and is embodied in one language. A new freedom of thought and a new ideal of beauty appear; and, as one studies all the sequel of history, the more one finds attributable to the genius of the people who did this thing. It is the miracle of Greece, and may justly be regarded as the greatest dividing point in history. Yet the Greeks who performed it, were as near to us as halfway from the building of the Great Pyramids.

The point has been marked by many students of general history; but it is not yet seen in its true perspective by the greater public or in our programmes of

education. We are apt still to think of the Greeks rather as a leading people in the ancient world than as the true pioneers of modern life. They appear to us rather as a parallel, but diverse, influence to the Jews, instead of—what they really were—the modernizing and rationalizing force which changed the old Jewish national cult into a world-religion. We miss their greater significance because we have not been accustomed to put in its due place the rôle of science, which the Greeks created. Could we correct this view, and see them as they were, nearer to us than to the priests of Egypt, our masters and fellow-workers in most of the tasks we have in hand, the whole course of history would gain in clearness. But many obstacles obstruct the vision.

In the first place, the masterful Romans imposed their language on most of the nations of the West, and even in our own language, which owns another origin, the Roman element bulks large and the Greek but small. In the second place, morally the most important, Christianity, though so largely Greek in origin, became popular with the spread of the Jewish scriptures. Especially in Anglo-Saxon lands the Jewish scriptures have, through historical causes, acquired a superior place, apart from other writings, and Greek poetry and philosophy are consigned, with the deepest respect, to the care of a learned few. Something may be done to correct the balance by popularizing the use of translations, but in translating poetry it is most difficult both to preserve the meaning and represent the beauty. And, in the miracle of Greece, beauty, allied with freedom of thought, must take first place.

The poetry of the Greeks would have this effect of miraculous beauty more strongly than any other part of their achievement, if we could bring to it a fresh mind and eye, qualified by sufficient knowledge of the language, and a sense of rhythm and music more common with

earlier peoples than with us. Homer comes to us full-fledged with words and metre, although we know that centuries of preparation must have gone to the making of both. Imagine a singer appealing, as Homer does in the 'Hymn to Apollo,' to the maidens who form his audience:

"O maidens, if any one asks you who was the sweetest of singers
And who pleased you most?
Answer with one voice, It was a blind man who dwells in craggy Chios;
His songs shall be first for evermore."

Could anything be more moving, sung in flowing hexameter verse?

The verbal analysis and historical speculations which fill most of the scholars' books about Homer, come as a veil between us and the full natural appreciation of the beauty of his work. Yet something must be said to enable the modern reader, or hearer, to put himself somewhere near the position of those who first heard the poems, and by their co-operation gave them the life which seems likely to last as the singer expected. They must have arisen with those northern tribes who came down from Thessaly just before the first millennium B.C. and who appear in Homer himself as 'Achæans.' They were carried over the sea with the Greek wanderers who settled in Asia Minor, and were there refashioned in what is called the Ionic dialect, before they came back again to Greece proper to be canonized at Athens. About 600 B.C., of all the mass of Homeric lays, the two greatest—the Iliad and the Odyssey—were selected by public decree to be annually recited at the greatest Athenian public festival—the Panathenæa.

They thus combine in their history all the main elements which made up Greece, the original 'Aryan'

element from the North, vigorous and warlike, the softer and more speculative element, which was born in Ionia, and the genius of the mistress city, which stood for all Greece in her prime, Athens. We must believe in a multitude of gifted singers, however much we may attribute to one, the greatest of all. The lays dealt with traditional stories—for the Greeks were the princes of story-tellers—relating to the wars, the royal houses and the patron deities of the invaders. They were edited, modified to suit the views of rival cities, and humanized to suit the higher morality of later times.* When finally settled about 500 B.C. they became the Bible of the Greeks, the store-house of legends for their plays, a quarry for criticism and a standard of life, more complete, perhaps, and less interrupted than the influence of the Bible has been in the modern world.

Our view of Homer, and the fate of Homer in the future, are two of the most interesting problems in the relations of the New to the Old. For the Old he was supreme. Not only his beauty, but his thought, was commanding in his own sphere. From him flowed the whole stream of epic poetry, through Virgil to Dante, Milton, and the host of minor followers. But the epic has given place to the novel, and the form of Homer, apart from the exquisite verse, seems likely to become more and more venerable, but antique. His stories, however, and types of character are of perennial interest, and it is noticeable that as time goes on, the Odyssey, which is less a tale of war than the Iliad, surpasses it more and more in popular appeal. The German philosopher Herbart, in one of his educational books, recommended the Odyssey as the first connected reading-book for children, combining, as it does, so many strands of interest—geography, history, a good story and poetry,

* See some short but decisive examples in Gilbert Murray's *Literature of Ancient Greece*, p. 40.

beautiful even in translation. Herbart's advice has been widely followed. But the Iliad will meet increasingly with the critical feeling which revolts at the glorification of fighting and is horror-stricken at the supreme position which can be assigned to a man capable of the barbarities of Achilles.

Yet if we are to understand history, we must understand that also, and how Alexander the Great, who modelled himself on Achilles, was capable of striking down his oldest friends with his own sword, though the work of his life was bringing men together in a new gospel of 'Omonoia,' or Concord.

Homer was not meant as a gospel, and the Greeks were mistaken, and their philosophers made unnecessary difficulties for themselves, by treating him as such. He, or they, the singers of an early day, sang to give pleasure to themselves and their hearers. Their songs have lived, and will live still longer, because they offer, in the most musical language yet achieved by mankind, a picture of life, memories of which their hearers were proud, types of character and action which have an eternal interest for those who have inherited their thoughts and are carrying out their life in other forms. Bravery is an eternal value, whether it be shown in facing a foe in battle or ascending to the stratosphere in a balloon. In Homer it is typified in many forms—commanding in Agamemnon, generous in Menelaus, high-spirited in Achilles. All these are great on the battle-field. But there is counsel as well; in Nestor, wise in years, and Odysseus, full of cunning words and schemes. Hector is the type of loving husband who loves honour more. Penelope, the matron and constant wife, faithful against time and importunity. Loyal and passionate friendship finds its place, conspicuously in Achilles, tortured even at night by the loss of his companion. All—with children, slaves, minstrels and

maidens—are truly drawn to life and speak to the twentieth century as clearly as to the last millennium B.C. To the Greeks they had the added value of keeping alive the tribal and local associations among which they lived. Achilles stood for the northern home in Thessaly from which the Achæans came. Troy was the meeting place for trade and conflict between the two main scenes of their activity. The Pillars of Hercules marked the limit westward of their colonial expansion. For us this side of the poems has now only a historic interest, but, as humanity has been built on history and the Greeks have done most to build it, we may rest assured that memory will not fail here, however much it has to add of later human sufferings and achievement.

The second main section of Greek poetry is the drama which, like the epic, first comes before us in a full panoply of splendour in Æschylus. But there is this difference as to authorship, that, with Æschylus, at the beginning of the fifth century B.C., we are in the full light of history. We are dealing with poets whose lives and parentage are known, and though the first of his plays, like Homer, implies a long procession of other play-writers bringing it to its actual state, yet of these earlier poets, though their works are lost, we know some of the names and many of the characteristics. The Greek tragedy is not to the same extent as the epic born fully armed from the head of Zeus.

We know how the tragedies began, in religious dances at the festival of Dionysus. The word ' tragedy ' means a goat-song, which was first sung at the festival of the god by a number of men in disguise headed by their poet. He told the story of the hero who was being celebrated, and the chorus sang and danced. Gradually action and dialogue were developed, and the part taken by the chorus reduced. But as the acting and dialogue parts became predominant, an effort was made to preserve

the primitive dance and buffoonery by adding a purely 'satyric' play at the end. Thus at the end of the lifetime of Æschylus, who did most to give tragedy its classic form, the complete performance would consist of a 'trilogy' of plays linked together in subject, followed by the relief of a satyric play. It so happens that among the few plays of the whole mass which have survived, we have one complete 'trilogy' of Æschylus—the Oresteia, and one satyric play—the Cyclops of Euripides.

From such a curious origin comes the drama of modern Europe, and its rules were for long governed by the Greek tradition which Aristotle faithfully interpreted from the practice of the three great masters. Clearly the chorus part was bound to grow less, or disappear altogether, as the actors took more part; but the religious aspect had a more profound effect. It kept men thinking on questions of the divine government of the world, the effects of sin, the power of fate over both gods and men, the character of the gods and their traditional actions. The drama took, therefore, for the Greeks the place of the pulpit, the lecture and the serious literature of modern times. No doubt the poets themselves were serious and individual thinkers, and we must believe also that they reflected in large measure the moral and religious ideas of their time.

Æschylus, who was to the end treated as the most venerable of the tragic poets, owed this pre-eminence to many causes. He was a noble and had fought at Salamis, the great naval battle which disposed of the invading fleet of Xerxes. He celebrated this battle in the play of the 'Persæ', which we still possess, and, though a conservative and anti-democratic in the politics of his own country, he gives in that play the victory song of freedom, the boast that the Greek could not be the slave of any man. Above all, he was the voice of religious Greece, tracing to divine help and guidance the rise and

preservation of the Greek states. He had learnt from Pythagoras a stern but orderly view of the government of the world. God was supreme and must be honoured. Impiety and overbearing wealth or pride would bring retribution in their train. Zeus, the supreme God, will see to this, and is conceived as always engaged in thus subduing excess and harmonizing the claims of the old Chthonian or earthly powers with the dictates of Fate and the final happiness of man.

Two plays of his stand out as supreme, the 'Agamemnon' and the 'Prometheus.' These two, more than all the rest of the extant Greek drama, give the serious aspect of Greek thought in its most splendid form. The splendid language is in its own way a miracle, as great as the hexameter of Homer; but, while with Homer we are naturally thinking of the long unknown process by which the Greek language had reached that stage, with Æschylus, the first thought must be of the profound and richly stored individual mind, which could in the given forms weave a tissue, gorgeous and full of thought. Serious and sad it is: one may well wonder that, with the national victory for freedom still ringing in his ears, the poet should yet feel bound to represent Prometheus, the friend of man, suffering unimaginable agonies for thousands of years before his final release from the harsh punishment of Zeus. He gives in a famous speech the first sketch in literature of the rise of mankind from brutishness. Prometheus had done it all, and yet he must expiate, by this unutterable penalty, what seems no offence at all—a passing act of insubordination to the Supreme Power, a Power which he had himself defended in earlier days. The solution is not given in the extant plays, for the Prometheus Released is lost. We have to believe in a view of human progress, tragic indeed, but evidently sincerely held by the poet, that even the greatest steps forward

which mankind may make, must be made at the cost of tremendous suffering, that offences of insubordination against the highest ruling powers in the universe can only be condoned at the highest cost.

It is interesting, and of high import, to note how, judged by this case and the general tone of Greek tragedies, the temper of modern man is more cheerful at times of high festival and enjoyment. We think in these days, and for long have thought, that the Universe is more friendly to man than the Zeus of Prometheus and the Greeks.

The Agamemnon—the first part of the Oresteian trilogy—is more perfect as a play, though less profound in its philosophy than the Prometheus. It has been given to us twice within twelve months* in England in the Greek, first at Cambridge in the autumn and in the summer at Bradfield. Such performances, and the interest they arouse, are the best proof of the continued vitality of the great things in art. The 'Agamemnon' has less general human interest than the 'Prometheus,' but rests on the most often repeated legend connected with Argos—the central state of Achæan Greece—and its ill-fated rulers. It was the richest morsel of the Homeric banquet from which Æschylus was said to draw his plots. The Trojan war is there and its causes, for Helen was married to the nephew of Agamemnon; and it adds to this the gruesome tales of Agamemnon's own house. Æschylus treated these in his 'Oresteia' in the most dignified and satisfying way, if we accept, as he did, the traditional views of the need of expiation and of the high functions of Apollo, the god of the oracle at Delphi. Those who wish to see the story worked out in all its details must turn to Dr. Verrall's brilliant reconstruction in his book on the play. Here—apart from the splendour of the poetry—one can only

* 1933-34.

note two things. First, the awful silence which follows Agamemnon's entry to his palace and the shriek which breaks it. This has with justice been called the most tremendous single moment in all drama. Second, the approach of Cassandra to her doom in the wake of her master. Her speeches, with their prophetic and agonized insight into past and future, are the most thrilling of the words in the play. In his own way, but with equal depth, Æschylus, as well as Euripides, could do justice to the soul of a woman as men had never done before the Greeks.

Sophocles, the second of the great trio, stands to Æschylus somewhat in the same sort of relationship as the Odyssey to the Iliad. Both treat of the same range of subjects and both follow the same general rules of art. But Sophocles, like the Odyssey, is more perfectly knit together, is softer and more humane and continues, after death as in his lifetime, to be approached more for pleasure than for inspiration and awe. He was a lad of fifteen when Æschylus was fighting at Salamis, and he lived into his ninetieth year, just before the fall of Athens at the hands of Sparta. There is a story that he was the leader of a chorus of boys singing in celebration of the Salamis victory, and his long life of unfailing power gave rise to a string of such tales, none to his serious discredit. Pericles' "Good poet, but bad general," is the worst of them, and when we remember that his masterpiece the 'Œdipus Tyrannus', is more quoted by Aristotle than any other play, we can realize the supremacy of his position as artistic master of the Athenian stage.

It is as a supreme artist that he stands out in the succession, and this artistry is shown by the perfection of his language, by the faultless concentration of the parts and interests of his plays, and by the fact that

the tragic emotion, in which he is as great as any other poet, is with him subdued to a serene quiet and nobility of bearing. Œdipus, after the awful stress of the main tragedy which bears his name, goes to his death in the 'Coloneus' with blessings on his lips. The avenging goddesses are now kind, the "sweet daughters of old night," and for those whom he leaves behind, he asks only "prosperity and that they may remember him."

Euripides, the third of the great dramatists, has been the subject of more controversy than either of his predecessors, and is now probably more read and enjoyed than any other Greek poet except Homer. In England, he has re-arisen gloriously through the critical analysis and reconstruction of Gilbert Murray and Dr. Verrall. The reasons for this will be clear in a moment; with Euripides the Old began consciously to hold out its hands towards the New. Yet it is well to remember that Euripides, strangely new as we find so much of his thought, is himself a part of the Old. Salamis was a link between the three masters of Greek tragedy. Æschylus fought at it. Sophocles sang for it. Euripides was born on the day of it. The story was that his parents had taken refuge at Salamis during the Persian invasion. Having tried, we are told, first the profession of an athlete and then of a painter, he settled down to tragedy at the age of twenty-five. In fifty years he produced eighty to ninety plays, won five first prizes and died in the same year as Sophocles, 406 B.C. His greater popularity is witnessed by the large number of his plays which survive (we have nineteen against seven each of Æschylus and Sophocles), and by the far larger number of fragments and quotations. He was the most acted tragedian of the Hellenistic age, and when we reach Chapter VII, some fuller reasons

will be seen why he should have appealed so strongly to men, still imbued with the earlier traditions of Greece, who were moving away from their ancient moorings into a larger, if more troubled, sphere. This transitional spirit is the most marked thing about his general mental attitude.

Something akin in the temper of the present day has made Euripides again the most popular of the Greek tragedians. He preserves in his plays a façade of the old beliefs, but constantly lets his hearers see what he really thinks about them:

> " Say not there be adulterers in heaven,
> Nor prisoner gods and gaolers. . . .
> God, if he be God, lacketh naught. All these
> Are dead unhappy tales of minstrelsy."
>
> *Heracles* (1341).

> " No man has tasted another life, because the things under us are unrevealed, and we float upon a stream of legend."
>
> *Hippolytus* (192).

Again, while chafing at tyrannic rule and often denouncing it, he feels, as forward-looking minds of to-day, intense sympathy with sufferers from unjust punishment or arbitrary subjection. Hence the frequent outbursts of his women, and the readiness with which he turns the traditional judgments inside out, re-writes the story of Helen, Creusa and Alcestis, and stirs a chord in our hearts even for the blackest offenders, Medea, Phædra, Stheneboia.

But it is an obvious, though too frequent error, to treat Euripides primarily as a preacher. He was a professional dramatist, who aimed first and foremost at a successful play, and the multitude and diverse

character of his plays demonstrate both his ability and his versatility. Verrall would have us think that he was habitually laughing in his sleeve at the audience who expected the time-honoured myths; but when we come to such a wierd, thrilling and quite serious play as the Bacchæ—which many judges put first of all—one feels that there was a real vein of deep, if unorthodox, religion in him, that he recognized those elements in our nature, not submissive to reason, which have yet a vital part to play in human life. This, it will be seen, is another aspect of Euripides in which he anticipates thinkers of many schools in the present day.

One poet of the old Attic Comedy remains to us, and he must be the last name to mention. Aristophanes, who survived the three great tragedians, was on his own lines at least their equal, and nowhere else than in his plays have we so vivid a picture of actual life in Athens at its prime. Nowhere else, too, in literature —except in Shakespeare—have we a parallel to his combination of lyric beauty, rollicking humour and fantastic fairy-like imagination. We know him from the dialogues of Plato to be a serious and companionable thinker. We see him on the stage attacking and travestying with the utmost freedom and courage all the idols of the popular worship, Cleon, the demagogue, Euripides, the sentimental poet, Socrates, the supposed Sophist and corrupter of youth. That all this took place in the open air, with the plaudits of the crowd themselves, and that the plays which contained it have come down to us as a masterpiece of language and a storehouse of customs and thought, is one of the most striking features in the whole miracle of Greece. Three of the plays appeal most strongly to modern taste because they touch on things of more than temporary interest to the

Athenians. These are the *Clouds*, the *Frogs* and the *Birds*. The *Clouds* is immortal, and perhaps the best known of all, for its caricature of Socrates, unfair no doubt but probably not unfriendly, before Socrates had been enshrined in the Dialogues of Plato. The *Frogs* is an onslaught, in similar vein, on Euripides and ends in a solemn preference for the more time-honoured and conservative Æschylus; for Aristophanes himself always speaks as a defender of the ancient ways. The *Birds*, his greatest triumph, is perhaps the most exquisite of all burlesques, full of good humoured chaff for the extravagant ideas of Athenian imperial aggrandisement, still more remarkable for a minute and understanding study of the birds. They build a Utopian town midway between the earth of Athens and the heaven of Zeus, holding them both at a submissive distance. It may be safely foretold that this play will be read and acted as long as men care for Greece or ideal fancy or wit, mingled with beauty of language and sympathy of thought.

VI

THE GREEKS IN SCIENCE

IN the last chapter we gave a first impression of the miracle of Greece as it meets the student of history when he reaches the last millennium B.C. Up to that point he had been following the slow development of the ancient civilizations, of which the best known and the most important for us, are Egypt and Babylonia. Akin to these and more recently explored are Crete and the Hittites. Into this world of ancient art and ancient institutions comes a new force from the north —Greek life and thought—which is to transform the whole; and its first document is in itself a perfect and seemingly miraculous thing—the Homeric poems. We know nothing of what preceded them, but we are sure that their original material was taking shape about a thousand years B.C. We do not know when any part of them was first written down but we are sure that they had assumed a form, much as we now have it, about 600 B.C. and that soon after that time they were by law publicly recited in Athens on their greatest festival.

The making of these poems by the Greek genius is its first immortal achievement. From the sixth century onwards, when the Homeric poems were complete, the work of the Greek spirit may be followed in three distinct but parallel streams,—their fight for freedom, their realization of beauty in the drama and the plastic arts, their foundation of science by the earliest scheme of laws in mathematics and astronomy.

It is a remarkable fact, and forms one of the bright shining spots on the chain of history, that these three movements culminate together almost at the same moment. The Ionic revolt of 500 B.C. against Persia marks the time, and the general movement—freedom, beauty and science—centres at first round Ionia and especially round its chief city, Miletus. In 498 B.C., two years after the revolt, the Athenians joined forces with the Milesians, marched up country to Sardes, which had been the capital of Lydia, and had lately come under the Great King, and burnt it as a challenge to Persia. The challenge was kept in mind by Darius and led to Marathon. It led also to the permanent distinction of Athens as the leading city in free Greece. The political story—with its disappointing sequel in the misuse of naval power by Athens and the long suicidal struggle with Sparta—is familiar school history. The canonization of Homer, and the development of the drama, which were sketched in the last chapter, also centred finally in Athens and were contemporaneous with the fight for freedom. We noticed how the battle of Salamis forms a link between the three greatest dramatists. It now remains to see the foundation of science, as the third connected side of the same growth of the human spirit in the Greeks, the most gifted incarnation of it which has yet adorned the earth.

As to the main centre, and the approximate time for the first appearance of science among the Greeks, there is no question. It was in Ionia, which led the revolt. Tradition is unanimous about this, and about Thales of Miletus, the chief of the 'Seven Wise men' of Ionia and the first geometer of Greece. One must date his probable 'flourishing' at about a hundred years earlier than the Ionic revolt. He is said to have predicted an eclipse of the sun which is variously

given as 585 B.C. or 610 B.C. He was clearly a personal link between the Babylonian and Egyptian science of his time, and added to the curiosity of the travelling Greek a philosophic mind which sought to bring diverse facts and phenomena together and find a common form or law to satisfy the mind. This is the critical step which leads to science and philosophy and in attributing it first to Thales, we follow the universal tradition of the Greeks. Men were then passing from practical work and empiricism to science when they saw that what had before been noticed only as a quality of a number of separate similar things, is sometimes actually and always a part of the thing in which it had been observed. Thus—to take one of the geometric truths attributed to Thales—the universal right-angle in a semi-circle must have been observed for generations by Egyptians or Babylonians who had drawn it; it became a scientfic truth when it was generalized. This, so far as we know, was first done by the Greeks, and they gave the honour of priority to Thales of Miletus, learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, and a wise citizen in the government of his own town and country.

It is noticeable in these beginnings of science, that the moral and practical spirit was always present in the minds of the founders. This became still more evident in the case of the school and prophet who filled men's eyes most at the close of the sixth century B.C., at the time of the Persian crisis, and who have in consequence enjoyed most renown ever since. This was Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans. The prophet, the founder of the school, was said to have been born about the time of Thales' eclipse, at Samos, the island state lying across the harbour of Miletus and rival to it in trade and blood. It was Dorian, of the same tribe and tradition as Sparta, more conserva-

tive and disciplinarian than the men of Ionia and Athens. Pythagoras, like Thales, was said to have been a traveller, learning, as he went, the wisdom of the East. He was expelled, so it was said, from his native city by the tyranny of its ruler Polycrates, and fled to Crotona in Magna Grecia or South Italy. Here at any rate an order of Pythagoreans flourished about that time and till the middle of the next century, studying and collecting geometrical and other truths, living a religious life and taking an active part in the politics of the neighbourhood. To this activity they owed their final dispersion which was accompanied, so the story goes, by the divulging of their mathematical wisdom.

Later critics have been inclined to doubt the whole legend and even the personality of Pythagoras, in much the same way as the historical reality of Christ has been doubted. In both cases it seems more reasonable to assume the reality of the person, than that a movement or a brotherhood should arise without a founder. What, however, most likely of all, is that Pythagoras, unlike Thales and the many Greek thinkers whose definite thoughts and sometimes words are preserved, was rather a mystic than a scientific thinker and that round him gathered many men and much of the thought of the time. Two things at least are certain, about this period in Greece and in the history of thought. There was much religious thinking of a mystic kind, connected mainly with the name of Orpheus; with this, Pythagoreanism was akin. And there was also, by the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century, a large mass of mathematical knowledge, collected, diffused and highly valued by the Greeks. They attributed this mainly to the followers of Pythagoras; and Æschylus, said himself to be a friend and disciple, celebrates the achievement in the famous speech of

Prometheus* on the benefits which he has conferred on men:

'I taught them the risings of the stars and their settings,
'Hard to distinguish.
'I taught them too the science of numbers
'Noblest of all contrivances.'

This mass of scientific thinking pours into the Platonic circle towards the end of the fifth century. The connecting link between the early and somewhat legendary Pythagoras and the Plato group was the definitely historical Philolaos, a philosopher born in Magna Græcia, it is said in 480 B.C., the famous year of Salamis. There is no doubt that he was in touch with the master and his first group of followers, no doubt also that he directly influenced Plato, probably in person, certainly by his writings. He published the first book on the Pythagorean doctrines which covered a wide range, including the elements, the theory of numbers, astronomy, the connection of number with sound, and moral religous doctrines on the nature of the soul. It is impossible here to give any of the details, or even to mention the names of the scores of Greek thinkers who contributed to this first attempt at a scientific synthesis. What we are concerned to make clear is the abundant fertility of the Greek genius, its concentration into a narrow space of time, and its essential connexion, first, with religious thought, and then with the free movement of the mind, in attempting to co-ordinate their thought and observations on a new basis of objective nature. Men like Thales tried to reduce the complex of phenomena to order, as manifestations of

* Æschylus, Prometheus, 465-8.

some original substance such as water, air, etc., instead of the old animistic beings of mythology.

To the century's work, culminating in Plato at the end of the fifth century, is due the bulk of geometry which we find in Euclid, arithmetic in some respects more advance than what is now taught in elementary courses, a first sketch of astronomy, including tentative suggestions as to the movements of the earth and ingenious ideas as to the source of the light of the sun, a first guess as to material elements, the discovery of incommensurable quantities, leading ultimately in the modern world to the mathematical handling of the infinite.

It will be noted that all this is mainly mathematical, and that the first sketch of mathematics which culminates in Plato, precedes the first sketch of biology which culminates in Aristotle. It was natural that this should be so, because men must begin to count and measure things before they study the laws of their growth. The whole history of science may be regarded as the story of mathematics running all the time to catch up with the immense growth of observed facts in the world around and within us. Just as Sir James Jeans now tells us that it was a mathematically-minded God who started things on this course, so Plato two thousand three hundred years ago declared that God was a geometer. The biologist might reply that in that case the divine mind could apparently only accomplish its purpose in a future infinitely remote. The lag of mathematics on other knowledge was accentuated in Greek times by the want of a simple and useful system of notation. They used the letters of their alphabet to stand for numbers, but even this was not arranged in a consistent way till the Greeks of Alexandria took it up some hundred years after Alexander and Aristotle. Their want of a convenient notation

makes what they did all the more wonderful, but the invention of the cypher—by the Arabs from the Hindus—about a thousand years later, and the various symbols for the infinite, etc., in use in modern mathematics, have made possible a growth of abstract mind denied to the Greeks. Their expression in language, as witnessed by the Homeric hexameter, was incomparable; their expression in mathematics was cumbrous and hampered, for want of symbols. This is one reason, added to their visual æsthetic sense, why their mathematics remained to the end mainly geometrical.

If you look at the Parthenon sculptures in the British Museum, you can have no doubt that at least anatomy—among the biological sciences—had made some way by the middle of the fifth century B.C. Both human figures and horses are so true to life that some great critics, such as Goethe, have praised them as if they were the prototype of the living thing. In the famous horse's head the nostrils drink the air; the eye has an expression of fire; the bony structure is clearly defined and opposed to the sensitive flexibility of the nose; the arched neck is tense and brawny. "The whole is a perfect combination of truth to nature with the highest poetical conception."

Goethe was one of the earliest moderns to do justice—sometimes more than justice—to the Greeks. What he feels about the horse's head must be felt also about their human figures, whether seen in the frieze of the Parthenon or read in Euripides. They are an ideal, based on a study of nature and transmuted by the highest poetic power.

There was, therefore, the beginning of biological as well as mathematical science among the Greeks, though we shall see in a moment how it was that they were unable to advance as far in the former

as in the latter. The name of Hippocrates stands for the science of life in the fifth century B.C., and it is immortal on the rolls of medicine. He lived in the same environment as the men who founded physical science. A native of Cos on the Ionian coast, he was taught by Democritus who first preached an 'atomic theory' of nature, and is referred to with respect by Plato. Medicine, like all science, had its roots in religion. Hippocrates was a member of the order of priest-physicians called Asclepiadæ and was actually believed to be the nineteenth or seventeenth in descent from the divine hero Asclepius who founded the gens. Asclepius had temple hospitals all over the Greek world, where the patients were treated by a mixed religious and medical method, in well chosen sites, with pure air and sun and various simple potions and massage. Hippocrates inherited all the sound side of this tradition and discarded the superstitious and magical. A disease in his view was only called 'divine' when the practitioners, through ignorance or inexperience, could not connect it with anything they knew. If the patient recovered, their charms and quack remedies were justified; if he died, the gods were to blame. Hippocrates devoted himself to the study of the natural course of diseases and their natural remedies. 'Air, Water, and Place', the title of one of his works, indicates what he rightly considered as among the primary conditions for preserving health. He would have been able to advance further in his scientific knowledge of the body, had it not been for the ban on dissection which Greek reverence for the dead imposed. How, without dissection, could one arrive at any fundamental knowledge of the working of the organs, above all the most important—the circulation of the blood—which was to wait two thousand years for Harvey? The knowledge of the organs therefore was based on the

external view open to the sculptor, and of health on external symptoms and on the regular working of the bodily functions. These Hippocrates, with the wisdom of a great physician, connected with the right functioning of the mind.

The works of the Greeks in science groups itself naturally round two great centres and two great epochs. The first may be called Athenian and centres in Plato, the second is Alexandrian and might be called Archimedean. This does not, of course, imply that the men of science were born, or even lived most of their time, at either of the two cities. But both were in turn for centuries the centres of the intellectual life of the age and attracted both masters and students. Aristotle, like his friend and pupil Alexander the Great, was a link or bridge between the two periods. Dante's oft-quoted description of him as the "master of those who know", is so apt that it must be quoted again. He was not himself one of the pioneers, less original than many of them, notably than Democritus, and capable of obvious mistakes, even in his own favorite field of natural history. But his mind was so active and omnivorous, he was so ready to criticize sympathetically what other men had said or thought, so anxious to bring all knowledge together in one harmonious whole, that he became in his own lifetime, and remained for over a thousand years, the master-intellect of the West. It was this universal quality which commended him to the scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages, and in this he has never been surpassed. He faces towards the modern world by his interests in biology. In this his industry was amazing, and his observations, especially of marine creatures, have often brought surprises of truth and accuracy even to latter-day specialists. He was weaker on the mathematical-physical side of science, in which he was inclined to

argue on first principles rather than observation. Even in biology, he could not go far, without a true conception of the functions either of brain or heart, or any inkling of the genetic laws which are building up the science in our own day. But as synthetizer of the knowledge of his day, as a broad and permanent causeway between Old and New, he was and remains supreme.

Down to the end the Greeks showed the special quality of their genius by the superiority of their mathematical work over that done in any higher or special branch of science. They geometrized to the last, and in Euclid produced a man whose very name passed for generations as synonymous with the subject which he taught. With Euclid we are in Alexandrian times. That he taught mathematics in the school of Alexandria, under the first of the Ptolomies, is the one thing that we know for certain about him. But it is interesting to notice the unbroken thread which unites his work with that of the earlier school rooted in Pythagoras. Archytas of Tarentum was the last, and perhaps the greatest, of the scientific thinkers of the Pythogorean school. He was a friend of Plato, having met him when Plato paid one of this two visits to Magna Græcia. Tarentum, being more remote from Sicily than the other Greek settlements in southern Italy, escaped much of the conflicts which desolated them. At the time of Archytas' birth, towards the end of the fifth century B.C., it was the richest and most powerful city in Magna Græcia. Here Archytas grew to manhood, and here he passed the mingled life of practice and abstract thinking which distinguished so many of the early Greek sages. He was an undefeated general, seven times reappointed in command of his fellow citizens. But his importance in the history of science rests on his discoveries in geometry, and the

fact, that he was able through his eminence, and his friendship with Plato and others, to pass on his ideas to later times. We must not here attempt to give the details, though Aristotle thought them worthy of a special treatise which is unfortunately lost. What we know is that they related to finding proportions between given lines, and that in the hands of his successors they led to the beautiful work in conic sections which is one of the glories of later Greek geometry.

The link between Archytas and Euclid and Archimedes, is found in Eudoxus, who was born at Cnidus in Asia Minor, some twenty years junior both to Archytas and to Plato. He visited Tarentum to learn geometry from Archytas, Cnidus and Tarentum being friendly commercial cities. Later on he went to Athens to hear Plato, and stayed over a year in Egypt to study the astronomy of the priests. He finally settled, and founded a school of geometry and astronomy, at Cyzicus on the Propontis. Travel went with study in those days, certainly more than it did with the systematic philosophers of the nineteenth century, who mostly weaved their systems at the native loom—Kant, Hegel, Spencer and Comte for instance, who hardly ever left their own countries or their own towns. In the end, however, all roads led to Alexandria from the end of the fourth century B.C. onwards, and there the work of Eudoxus was taken up and completed by Euclid.

No part of history is more fascinating, or more convincing of the reality and nature of the progress of manhind, than that which describes how in the region of abstract thought, men like Eudoxus were able to go on from the work of their predecessors to something more perfect. They pieced together what they had received, with fresh intuitions, making at last in the fabric of mathematics a structure which bears more evidence of the power of thought than anything

else which man has so far done. Eudoxus was one of the greatest of these builders. Readers must look elsewhere* for further proof and illustrations, but two of his discoveries, which are mentioned by Archimedes, may give some idea of his line of thought :—

Any pyramid is the third part of a prism which has the same base and the same altitude as the pyramid ;

Any cone is the third part of a cylinder which has the same base and the same altitude as the cone.

Simple to state and to realize when discovered, as were also the laws of Kepler and Newton in later days, the isolation from the maze of phenomena, and the establishment of such conceptions, have called for the highest powers of analysis from generations of gifted men. Eudoxus not only arrived at results but indicated methods. They came to the fullest fruit, possible in Greek times and by Greek minds, in the work of Archimedes and Apollonius who flourished in the third century B.C., just after Euclid. It so happens that the writings of both these men have survived, as have most of the works of Euclid. They have not, however, attained the same currency in modern times, through being more advanced and difficult, though they ranked deservedly higher among their contemporaries and immediate successors. To the names of both men the word ' Great ' has been habitually attached by those who put the triumphs of abstract thought above the conquests of the battle-field, or even the council chamber. Archimedes was the ' Great Geometer ', Apollonius the ' Great Mathematician '. Archimedes, who has often been thought the greatest geometrical mind which ever lived, became famous, and even legendary, in the Roman attacks on Syracuse in the Second Punic War. His real fame rests on his foundation of the science of hydrostatics, on his

* Allman's *Greek Geometry, from Thales to Euclid.*

approximation to modern ideas in what was called the 'quadrature' of curves and spherical bodies, what in modern terms is the 'integration' of infinitesimal quantities. Apollonius' works went on being discovered down to the end of the nineteenth century. They had been preserved by the Arabs in the Middle Ages, and have been translated into modern tongues from the Arabic. He was slightly junior to Archimedes and profited largely from his work. He carried the analysis of the conic sections, and many other curves, further than had been done before, and, like all the geometers of the time, sought for applications of his ideas in the geometry of the heavens. Some have credited him with anticipating the celestial mechanics of Tycho Brahe, eighteen hundred years later.

Hipparchus closes the roll of the greatest Greek names in science, as astronomer probably the greatest of all. He belongs to the second century B.C. and was born at Nicæa in Bithynia, though he observed in the island of Rhodes. We know his work mainly through the 'Almagest' (the Greatest Treatise) of Ptolemy, which, preserved by the Arabs, became the standard work on astronomy till Copernicus. It has been shown that this work of Ptolemy's is practically a rechauffé of Hipparchus, and still later researches attribute a good deal of Hipparchus's material to the Babylonians. There remains, however, the essentially Greek thing of co-ordinating the material and making a consistent theory about it. In particular, Hipparchus gave the first rational account of the precession of the equinoxes, catalogued more stars than anyone before him and laid the foundations of trigonometry.

When the modern world looks back on the achievements of the Greeks in science, its first impression is one of overwhelming wonder and respect for the keenness of intellect, the clearness of vision, the aptness

for synthesis, which could put together so beautiful and original a thing in so short a time. Less than four centuries separate Hipparchus from the Pythagoreans. We are approximately the same time from Galileo, and the two epochs are somewhat parallel in their fruitfulness and their importance for the development of the human mind. The latter is built on the former, and, though the modern building is incomparably richer in detail and various compartments of thought, the ground plan remains as the Greeks drew it. We look down on their foundations from any of the higher points that we have reached. This is a profoundly true picture, and its truth is vouched for by the evidence of language and of logic which, in all matters relating to science, derive ultimately from the Greeks. Yet, in reflecting on the differences between their world of science and ours, we find something so great and pervasive, that we are driven to change the metaphor, and, in describing the work of the moderns, take refuge in another. The Greek work was like a building, created deliberately stone by stone, and standing, when complete, static and beautiful like their temples and tombs. Modern science is a living thing, because it has added to the static principles laid down by the Greeks two powerful dynamic engines of thought, one in mathematics and the other in the sciences of life. The first is a calculus for dealing with the infinitely small and the infinitely great. As soon as this was achieved, the mind could deal rationally with change and movement which had always appeared an insoluble contradiction to the statically-minded Greek. Archimedes founded hydrostatics; it remained for Galileo and the calculus of the seventeenth century to inaugurate dynamics. The other fundamental difference is akin to this, and belongs to biology, the science of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The root-idea of

evolution had not dawned on the Greeks, viz., that life continues and developes on certain definite lines by means of a machinery of heredity, of which we are only now beginning to explore the details. But the main idea we *have* grasped, and it was denied to them. Life of all kinds has arisen by a series of small changes in living things, from the smallest and simplest imaginable creatures to the variety of animal and vegetable forms which surround us, to which we belong, and which now afford the chief field of research for science. Change, according to some defined order, which it is the highest object of science to reveal, becomes the supreme law of the modern world.

It is startling to set beside this the doctrine of Xenophanes (about 500 B.C.) "God always inhabits the same place without the least movement. It does not become him to turn now to one side and now to another."

VII

THE FIRST UNIVERSALISM

GREEK science died down as Rome began to conquer the world. There are two easy dates for connecting the two events. In 168 B.C. Perseus, the last king of Macedonia, was extinguished at Pydna by Æmilius Paulus. In 160 B.C. Hipparchus, the last great light in Greek science, was observing the stars in the island of Rhodes. The point is midway in the last three centuries B.C. which contain, as we shall see, the first approach to universalism among mankind, a task in which both Greek science and Roman imperialism had a large part to play. Greek science was to revive after a lapse of over a thousand years. The Roman Empire was to persist, with manifold transformations, even into our own days. The universalist idea, which combines the two in a more spiritual form, is still struggling to find adequate expression and impose itself upon a conflicting world. The three centuries, from Alexander the Great to the establishment of the Christian Church, saw the first conscious formulation of the idea, and for that reason they should be ranked among the most notable in all history.

Nowhere in history is the need of a synthetic point of view more apparent than here. The separate events with which the period is crowded, have been minutely studied—the career of Alexander, the downfall of the Roman republic, the birth of Christianity. But how the various parts of history here co-operated to produce one great result, whether indeed there was one great result, does not often exercise the minds of the historians. Yet surely this is the supreme question. Where

after all these changes, did mankind then stand? Had there been an advance on the whole front? Can we trace a gain in stability, in happiness, in command of circumstances, in co-operation among men and hope and energy for the future?

The first difficulty which will strike any historical enquirer who starts on these lines, is the gulf which seems to separate personal ideals and conceptions, and the institutions and forces which may maintain and generalize them. In all civilized ages, of which we have records, there have been individual thinkers with ideas far beyond the mass of their contemporaries, men sighing for a reign of justice in the midst of lawlessness and brigands, artists and poets longing for beauty in a world of hideousness and greed, saints full of the love of their fellows amid armies bent on mutual extermination. The general judgment we are seeking to pass is hard to reach. On the one hand, one feels assured that all such personal aspirations and high ideals have some root in the society where they are found. On the other hand, it is absurd to treat them as typical of an age, if the society of that age as a whole rejects and tramples on them. Examples of such contradiction crowd on the mind as soon as the difficulty is mentioned. Are we to treat Socrates as a type of the Athenian of his day, when they laughed at him in the 'Clouds' and condemned him to the hemlock? Can Buddha be thought to represent the religious thought of Hinduism, when to preach his gospel he had to abandon home and family, and when finally his doctrines and his followers die out in the country where he taught? Is the Stoicism of Marcus Aurelius really a human thing, if he can tolerate the wanton and unthinkable horrors of the persecution of Lyons? There is no way out of the dilemma, except the most complete knowledge and the most impartial weighing of all the

facts that we can attain. Even then finality and assurance in detail are unattainable. But we may believe, as we do about these three centuries B.C., that new and more advanced ideas become gradually prevalent, and that, in spite of adverse factors and setbacks, much was then done to establish, and make permanent, the better ideas that had been reached. It is a critical example of the meliorist theory of history. In that period, mankind as a whole, and particularly in the West, took certain great steps in the right direction which have not been lost, and remain a memorable part in the forward march.

In those three centuries ideas of human solidarity and salvation by union were put forward, and attempts were made to realize them such as we have no record of, and can hardly imagine, before that time. It may be said that, both in the Greek poets and in Jewish prophecy, there is abundant reference to the good of mankind and the 'coming of the nations'. Such utterances are the natural prelude to the breaking out of the full conception which we find both in men of action and in thinkers of the last three centuries B.C. It is true that we owe to Jews and to Greeks the first sketch of the unity of mankind, but it takes no definite form in their earlier thought. On the contrary the Jews who spoke of the 'call of the nations,' pictured a stream of loyal worshippers, thronging the temple at Jerusalem from all quarters of the globe. And the Greeks who described the benefits conferred by Prometheus or Hercules on mankind, were careful to distinguish between the full benefits received by the favoured few and those received by the barbarian mass who chattered an unintelligible gibberish and had no notion of the dignity and freedom of Man.

The period in which the great change took place, which is described in the title of this chapter, contains

two supreme events in the political sphere, and two in the region of moral and religious thought. It will be understood that we are speaking throughout primarily of the Western world, though no doubt influences from more oriental countries, such as Egypt and Asia Minor, Persia and possibly India (with Buddha) were present also. We concentrate on the Western world because it is from the consolidation of that world under Rome and the Catholic Church that the subsequent leadership of mankind is derived. The two capital political events were: first, the conquests of Alexander in the East and the foundation of a semi-Greek empire which lasted in a fragmentary form until Rome absorbed it; second, the foundation of the Roman empire which brought the West and the nearer East together, established the authority of a universal law, and provided the arena for a universal religion. The two events in the moral and religious sphere were: first, the passing of Greek thought from its narrower, and what may be called aristocratic, phase, represented by Plato and Aristotle, into the wider, vaguer but more human type, best represented by Stoicism; second, the roughly correspondent widening of the Jewish theocracy into a system—the Christian Church—which, while deriving its inspiration from Jewish ideas, aimed at all mankind without distinction.

It will be seen at once that all these events have a common tendency in establishing universal instead of sectional ideals for mankind, and that they all occurred within the last three centuries before our present era. A few words shall be said about each, mainly with the object of bringing out their striking convergence at this turning-point in world-history.

The conquering and political work of Alexander has always, since his early death, been a wonder and a romance for mankind. In a lifetime of thirty-three

years he ranged further in unbroken triumph and left more impress on the history of the world, than any ôther single man. Cæsar, with whom alone he could be compared, and who was the real founder of a more lasting empire, did not complete his work alone. It might indeed be easily maintained that Augustus was more truly the founder of the Roman empire than he. But Alexander stands out in solitary, brilliant splendour. This was his weakness as well as a source of personal success. Because he was thus fighting for his own hand, full of world-wide ideas, and emulating the god-like Achilles, when he fell, there was no individual and no social force, as in Rome, to perpetuate his work. His empire fell apart, and it is rather indirectly, by its social and intellectual, than by its political results, that he still lives. By spreading Greek ideas and the Greek language further East, he secured that Christianity, an Eastern religion, fell on Western soil, was propagated in Greek, and ultimately took possession of the capital of the Western world.

The romance of Alexander is world-wide, and full of the most attractive and various detail. The truth is now being gradually unravelled, and has quite lately received an unexpected but apparently a solid and important addition.* Every one knows that his father Philip summoned Aristotle to Pella as a tutor to his son. He stayed with him for eight years and maintained friendly relations with him afterwards, receiving rich supplies of natural history specimens with which to carry on his researches. But on one point the pupil reacted in a direction contrary to that imposed by the master. Aristotle had said that barbarians were slaves by nature, especially those of Asia. Alexander should therefore only treat Greeks as friends and the bar-

* See Dr. W. W. Tarn's Raleigh Lecture on *Alexander and the Unity of Mankind.*

barians as animals. The slave was simply a living instrument of those with greater souls than he. But Alexander, before his conquests, had conceived the idea that he was divinely sent to bring mankind together and reconcile the world. He would mix all men's lives and customs as in a loving cup, and treat all the good as his friends and only the bad as strangers. This was the true division in mankind, and not that between Greeks and barbarians. At a banquet on his campaign, when his Macedonians had revolted against his favour to the Persians, he prayed the gods for 'Homonoia' or concord between the people. Later he clinched this concord in the closest way by taking two wives himself from the Persian royal house, and marrying as many of his soldiers as would consent, to Asiatic wives.

But perhaps the most telling story of all that bear on this point is that told by Plutarch in his life of Alexander. He heard one day in Egypt from an Egyptian philosopher that, "all men are governed by God, because in every thing, that which is chief and commands, is divine." But what he pronounced himself upon this subject, was even more like a philosopher, for he said, "God was the common father of us all, but more particularly of the best of us."

This Plutarch story fits in admirably with what we now know of the monotheistic speculations of the Egyptian priests. Alexander adds to it a new human and moral element which he had gained himself from contact with others and from a vivid sympathy.

One is tempted to read into this more than the probabilities of the case, or our knowledge of Alexander's character, would seem to permit. Can we reasonably think of him as a philosophic mind anticipating what Professor Alexander in our own day might tell us, of the divine as emerging at each stage of evolution

a little higher than the good which evolution has already reached? Clearly not. We must think rather of a vigorous young mind reacting both towards what he had learnt from his tutor, and what he met with in his travels. It is not surprising that a generous soul, encouraged by ambition and the advice of men like Isocrates and Aristotle, should enter on a campaign of world-conquest in the interest of Greece, and then, when engaged in it, should find that many of the people whom he met, were at least as worthy as the average of his following. What more natural than for such a man to say "Surely the true division between men is not between Greeks and barbarians but between good men and bad everywhere? And God, if he represents the highest ideal which we can conceive of men, must be nearer to the good than to the bad?" The significance therefore of Alexander in this respect must be that his is the first recorded voice which uttered a sentiment which must have occurred to many thoughtful minds before his time, to minds indeed far less acute or profound than Aristotle or Plato but more open and sympathetic. It fell to Alexander to say it, because he was brought in the course of his 'mission' face to face with many various human types and he said it with resounding effect, because the result of that 'mission' was to create a large common field in the Nearer East where men of many races, beside the Greeks, met in states and cities founded by Alexander and his followers, learnt Greek as well as their mother tongues, and were ready to drink in doctrines of common application to all makind. Such doctrines were not long in coming. They were the richest intellectual harvest of the time and came mostly from the East which Alexander's work had linked up with the Greek world and with Egypt. Stoicism was the most important of these doctrines, until the advent of Christianity.

Zeno, the founder, was a Phœnician from Cyprus who found his way after a shipwreck to Athens. Here he came on traces of Socrates and learnt largely from the Cynics who were a school of moral philosophers, applying one part of the Socratic tradition. Zeno improved on their teaching, making it wider and more human, and in particular developing the idea of Logos or reason, which was to be the guide of all men, as it was in fact the governing principle in the universe. Here therefore was another source of universalism. If reason is to be the guide of all men, Phœnicians as well as Greeks, it must ultimately reach all classes, slaves as well as free. This is what happened in the evolution of Stoicism, and made it in its later forms a meeting point with Christianity. Seneca, a Stoic, was thought by many people to be a Christian in disguise. The doctrine widened in its course from Zeno to Epictetus. At first there was a sharp distinction between the worthy and the unworthy which is an echo of the older opposition between Greek and barbarian. Then gradually the human qualities of all were recognized, so that the world-state, when it arrived with the Roman emperors, took in all to its fold. But throughout the course of its history Stoicism continued to glorify, even to deify the Homonoia or Concord for which Alexander had prayed at the banquet at Opis. Cleanthes, the successor of Zeno and the poet of Stoicism, has a noble Hymn to Zeus in which he declares:

"Thou understandest to bring the disorderly to order, the unfriendly to kindness;
"Thou hast yoked good to evil, so that there may be one reason for all."

It is interesting at this point to look back to the parallel doctrines which have been extracted from Egyptian papyri and were described in Chapter IV.

There we saw that 'Maat' or Righteousness was regarded as the direct offspring of the divine ruler: this was justice in the relations between the subjects of one ruler in one state. More than a thousand years have passed since the last expression of the moral rules of the theocracy of Egypt. A larger idea, referred also to divine parentage, now holds the field. It is an order of the whole universe in which both good and evil are included, and which is to be the rule of conduct for emperor and slave.

Stoicism moved from East to West as Rome was moving from West to East, incorporating the world. Their meeting was one of the most influential events in those three decisive centuries. The Stoic leaders passed, rather superficially, through the school of Greek philosophy. They gained little from it, except the most general ideas of moral culture, and were insensible to the finer side of Greek thought, its enthusiasm for beauty, its cultivation of life, its intellectual curiosity. In Rome it found its natural home, and it became the religion of the more thoughtful Romans until the triumph of Christianity. As early Roman republican virtue broke down, Stoicism came in to fill the void. It was as much a condition of the life and good work of the best early Roman emperors as Christianity was of Louis IX or St. Stephen of Hungary. It suited the Roman temper, because, while continuing their old tradition of a stern and self-denying life, it gave the world-wide basis which the new empire demanded. Thus we see it making its way with lawyers, statesmen and political and philosophical writers, just in proportion to the growing extent of their responsibility. Panætius was the chief Greek exponent of Stoic doctrines in Rome, and Cicero his most influential disciple. Their lives, however, did not overlap. Panætius had come to Rome in the middle of the second century B.C., when

her eastern expansion was making rapid way, and he died just two years before the birth of Cicero, who had to face the disorders and the harassing decisions of the last years of the republic. As a statesman, the weakness and vacillations of Cicero are patent to all men, as they were fatal to himself: as a writer and thinker he gave to the Greco-Roman world the best charter of its achievements, its claims and its duties, which we possess. His writings are the gospel of the first universalism before it was touched by the passion of pity and self-devotion which Christianity introduced. Large parts of them are transcripts from Panætius and earlier writers and little is original. But the spirit is human and comprehensive; they give, not Roman action, but Roman thought at its best.

The course of Roman history, with all the hardships and cruelties which it involved, was a training for mankind in the passage from a local patriotism to the consciousness of the reality and necessity of humanity as a whole, and of the duties of every part towards this whole. We shall see in the next chapter how Roman law co-operated in this result. Cicero exhibits the process in clear and sympathetic language, the words of a broad-minded, though not a profound or original philosopher. He traces the widening circles of duty and sympathy from the family to the city and to mankind, much as they would be traced by any modern thinker, true to the traditional morality of the race. "The fellowship of the race" and the "citizenship of the world" are familiar ideas and phrases with him, and a strikingly modern voice sounds again and again in words which describe the effect of man's science and action on the world, and the natural kinship of every noble impulse with the divine.

"We use the waters to give fertility to the land. "We confine the rivers to their courses and lead them

"where we would. By the work of our hands indeed "we are constantly struggling to introduce another "nature into the nature of things."

"So no great man ever lived without some breath "of the divine spirit."

The modern tone is unmistakable, but it is too optimist a modernism, spoken by a man with his eyes shut to the evils of slavery, the gross social injustices of his time, and the ruin that was at that moment overhanging the ancient order of Rome to which he belonged. The last phase of the first universalism is to come from another source.

As we pass down the last of the three centuries towards the birth of Christianity, the tone of Stoicism becomes less stately and self-satisfied. There is more consciousness of evil, more anxiety to be be away from the world and the body, and to be at rest with the Spirit of the Universe. The universalist thinkers of the earlier philosophic tradition were giving way to, or preparing to join hands with, the men who were to preach a gospel to the poor. This tendency is so marked that in the case of some of them, for instance Seneca, it has often been maintained that he was a Christian. In him there was a new tenderness, an avoidance of anger, a readiness to forgive injuries which suggest another source. The truer way to explain the change of tone is to think of it as a symptom of the social condition of the age. Although the empire brought great advantages to the provinces, and was at first a time of peace compared with the incessant fighting which had preceded it, in Rome itself life must have been hard to bear for a mind sensitive to the sufferings of others. A city, where the vast majority of the inhabitants were dependent on a public dole of corn, where most of the manual work was done by slaves, of whom the door-keepers were kept to their posts by chains, where the most popular enjoyment was the mutual slaughter of

gladiators at public games, where the head of no public man was safe if the informers breathed a word against him. Is it surprising that a philosophic mind, such as Seneca's, turned constantly to the thought of death? Was the good man justified in taking refuge in suicide from troubles that he could do nothing to alleviate and from pain which at last was more than he could bear?

Thus the scene was set for that last act in the first drama of universalism which was to be inspired from Palestine.

There can, of course, be no attempt here to trace the historical origins of Christianity. It has been more exhaustively explored than any other of the constituent streams of the new universalism, which, on a broad survey, is the outstanding feature of the last three centuries B.C. But one or two points are conspicuous in the early history of Christianity, linking it up with the other movements of the same time. These it is right to consider, in a general picture of the human spirit developing as a whole thing, leaning sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another, with depressions here and brilliant offshoots there, but always interconnected, and soon regaining its true onward course.

It is clear in the first place that the Near East must be the place for the uprising of such a universal religion. Alexander, with his northern conquering vigour and his Greek ideas, prepares the ground. We cannot imagine the spread westward of a doctrine deriving from a Palestinian tribe, without the social tissue which Alexander's empire had provided. More than that, it now seems certain that Alexander had in himself a strong intuition of the doctrine of human brotherhood which was to be fundamental in the new faith. The birth of Christianity from Judaism consisted precisely in the conquest of a narrow national religion by a wider

conception which was to embrace all mankind. The Jewish Messiah became the Saviour of the world. In the history of Judaism itself it seems to have been the final destruction of the Temple, and the dispersal of the religion which had centred in it, which left the field free for the Christian church. But when thus free from its Jewish connexions, the new church had to find its natural kin elsewhere. There were, on another side of religion, many mystery cults in the world which offered affinities. These are an important part of the history of Christianity as a whole, but not germane to this aspect of it. As a universal religion, offering to bring together and order the lives of men of all nations and conditions, it found its nearest point of contact in the later Stoics, such as Seneca and Epictetus, men deeply conscious of the evils of society and of the weakness of their own nature, and seeking for support. Seneca could hardly find it in his surroundings and looked for death. Epictetus, perhaps the noblest of the Stoics, found it in a doctrine which might well be identified with the moral teaching of Christianity, and in some respects went beyond it. "You carry God within yourself, and do you not see that you pollute him by impure thoughts and foul deeds!" And, comparing a man to a part of the body; "Looked at separately, it might be said that the nature of the foot was to be clean: looked at as a bodily organ, it has to tread on mud and thorns and sometimes to be cut off for the sake of the body. . . . So, as a member of a social whole, a man has to expose himself to sickness, danger, toil and premature death." Such a teacher was clearly a Christian outside the fold, and the believing Christian was able to offer to such a one not only a doctrine of duty comparable to his own but a glorious reward in another life to those who fulfilled it and died in the faith.

In the early stage of which we are speaking it was companionship in suffering, trust in a Redeemer and hope of a glorious hereafter which held believers together. Sharp definition and difference in theological belief do not appear till a later stage.

Perhaps the most vital thing in the new religion which enabled it to combine with the other elements in the growing universalism of the age, and ultimately to dominate them, was that it arose from the poor and suffering in the world. Without denouncing slavery as an institution, it took the slaves to its bosom. Without affronting the temporal powers, it quietly set up a Higher Power, to which, in case of conflict, it gave unquestioned superiority. Without attempting to despoil the rich, it made mutual provision for the poor of its own community. And for all there was, in another place, redress of ill and the happiness of love rewarded. Now, though we may in detail parallel both the moral precepts of Christianity and their ritual observances from non-Christian sources, yet as a whole the new thing was unparalleled. It combined a pure morality with mutual love and future hopes in a way which the world had not yet seen and deeply needed. The universalism of Alexander and the Romans was imposed from above downwards. Christianity reversed the process and bound up society from below upwards. The Stoics who had so much in common, had not this power, because they taught a stern individualism. Each man should, as a man, bear his burden. It was the law of the universe and he was unworthy of his place if he failed. But for the Christian there was another law which superseded both the Stoic law of the universe and the Jewish law of the covenant. Both these seemed, like the schoolmaster, to have worked to bring men to Christ, and to a new law of love.

It must be clear to every fair-minded student of history that it was from the juncture of these various, though converging, elements just before our present era that the modern world is born. And the two most formative were the Roman State and Law which had already absorbed Greek thought, and the religion from the East, ordering the emotions anew and putting them to new purposes. Something of these two supreme factors must be said in the next two chapters.

VIII

THE GREATNESS OF ROMAN LAW

CICERO, who says so many good things, reminds his brother Quintus somewhere, that as boys they had to learn the laws of the XII Tables by heart, as a piece of poetry that everyone should know. The Greek schoolboy of the same age had for centuries learnt the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is an instructive contrast—romance and invention for the one set, hard-headed business for the other. It is a true contrast, but not the whole truth, for the early republican Roman added to his hardness in dealing with others, a hardness in dealing with himself and a loyalty to his word and to his people, which also cannot be predicated of the Greeks. "If," says Polybius, "you have to trust a single talent to the care of others in Greece, you will need ten written documents, ten seals, twenty witnesses, and, after all, you will be cheated: at Rome you will have no security but the word of the depositary, and it will be religiously kept." He was of course a friendly witness, but there is abundant evidence to the truth of what he says. That quality of loyalty to their undertakings and tenacity to what they had secured, gave them, in the commanding position which they held in the Mediterranean, the empire of the Western world. These were also the qualities which led to the permanence of Roman law. They made it, as their mind to empire widened out, the best type of a system of law developing continuously from narrow and barbarous beginnings till it suited the requirements of the

most refined and varied societies and the dictates of the most abstract and philosophical justice. It may be possible to indicate a few of the steps and causes which led up to this result, but one ought at starting to try and realize the magnitude of the fact and its importance.

For the stability and orderly progress of any society, or of international society as a whole, the supremacy of law is the fundamental fact. Science is more universal and looks more to the future. But the very existence of society, and the fact that we can go peaceably about our business, depend on the general observance of law, and of understandings that constantly approach to the obligation of laws. We shall see in a moment that this wider circle of understandings formed with the Romans a most important factor in their law-abiding temper. But the whole sphere—of law and custom—is far too little observed in the ordinary study of history. It is treated as a world apart, almost as much secluded and neglected as the history of science. Lawyers study it perforce, and so far it is in a better plight than the history of science; but it does not exist in our minds as the central thread of Roman history any more clearly than the history of science and philosophy does in the case of the Greeks. And for this reason Roman history is more often misunderstood than Greek. The Greeks had so many graces to commend them beside the muse of science. The Romans were a rough-handed and unlovely people, and in later democratic days have fallen upon evil tongues who declare their empire to be "a violent and vulgar fraud," and their great men monsters or hypocrites. This could not have been, had those studying the history and passing the

judgment considered that, as it is now seen, the function of the Romans in the making of mankind was to establish the idea of law immutably in the world and to leave us in their own system the best example of how it has historically taken place.

But it is not as a museum piece that we study and admire it: Roman law is still the basis of the greater part of the civil law in the world. English-speaking countries are the largest exception to its direct influence and even they are by no means unanimous. In the Province of Quebec, for instance, there are frequent borrowings from the Roman law in the Civil Code and in many other cases where the debt is not acknowledged, the ultimate indirect source is Roman. And in non-English countries Roman law has generally prevailed. The French, German, Italian and Roman Dutch codes may be traced directly to the Roman jurists. But apart from the borrowing, direct or indirect, of definite laws, there is a much wider influence. For over a thousand years, in a central position in the Mediterranean world, there was a community growing and maintaining its continuity and extending its sway. First came forcible conquest of its neighbours by fighting. Then, administration on a legal basis, accommodating itself steadily to the needs of new-comers. Lastly, a religious organization, using much the same frame work and something of the same language, and actually extending the limits of the temporal authority which it supplanted. There has never been an instrument comparable to this for impressing the idea of action according to accepted rule upon all mankind. The Far East was at first least affected, and the country in the Far East, which is now in a state of apparently the most confirmed

disorder, China, is the one in which the ideas of Western science and Roman law have made least way.

There is another application of the matter, specially appropriate to a time like the present, when the possibilities of science have so far exceeded our dreams. They too no doubt are the result of a knowledge of 'laws', but not of laws applicable as yet in the same sense to human beings. By exercising our new-found powers on nature we have produced and are still producing marvels—and monstrosities—which have often doubtful or evil effects on human beings. Inventors press on, careful of nothing except the production of fresh marvels by scientific means. In such a state of affairs a system of human laws, firmly established and resting on ideas of general welfare, is a necessary safeguard. It is no doubt a conservative force; but is there any reformer so wild as not to wish to conserve certain valuable things, if necessary by law? Mussolini, we are told, imposes a tax on cinemas to be handed over to the theatres. Is not the drama worth preserving by law from extinction by mechanical imitations? The country-side is in constant danger of ruin from all sorts of by-products of mechanical zeal. Industry, and the human species itself, might be stampeded into hasty experiments which would bring more trouble than real profit. Against all such revolutions, political and otherwise, a law-abiding population, with a wholesome dose of caution, has means of protection.

The Roman political system went down before the joint forces of slavery and selfish vice within, and barbarians without. Its decay casts no stigma on its legal system, but is evidence of the immaturity of the society living under it and of the need of a moral reform which laws could not produce.

This moral reform is a continuous and general process in which all parts of humanity combine. It is indeed one aspect of the ascent of mankind as a whole, and we cannot disbelieve in it except at the cost of disbelief in our own nature and reason, for existence. But it has its setbacks and its detours, and at the conclusion of the Roman period there were grave evils and manifest decay which only a profound movement from below could permanently cure. We saw in the last chapter the main sources from which this movement was to arise. In the next we shall observe some of the results. But it would be a mistake of the gravest kind to treat the new era in which we live, as something of independent foundation, without debt or connexions with what has gone before. At all times in history what survives far outbalances the new, and it is the function of the historian to demonstrate this continuity. He should be our guardian against those cataclysmal theories which speak of 'civilizations' as things which spring up, blossom and disappear and attempt to scare us with visions of the *Untergang des Abendlandes*. No example is better qualified to dissipate such fallacies than Roman law. It survived largely in actual institutions, taken over by the barbarian chiefs. It survived also in the Roman ecclesiastical system which would have been impossible without it. It survived most effectively of all in the ideas of a law-abiding society, resting on some supreme sanction which never disappeared, though it might be for a time eclipsed. Thus, when in the twelfth century the beginning of a Renascence arrived, the soil was not unprepared, and fully developed Roman law was again studied and gradually adopted into modern codes.

We can trace back the origins of Roman law to men far more barbarous than the barbarians who overran the empire in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. The Romans were savages at a time when Egypt and Babylon had attained highly developed, and, as we saw in the case of Egypt, highly moral governments. They succeeded in making their system prevail, both as a type and in its actual provisions, partly owing to their geographical position, still more owing to their own qualities of firmness to tradition, combined with a common sense and receptivity which enabled them constantly to widen their ideas and adapt their practice to new conditions. It will be interesting to note some of the common points between the Roman origins and those of other peoples and then to set against them the distinctive features which produced the Roman triumph.

In all cases the origin of law is bound up with the religious ideas and practice of the law-making people. How complete and supreme the relation might be, we have seen in the case of the Egyptian Pharaohs. But with all people at a certain stage similar ideas prevailed. The sanction of the tribal or family god was specially concerned with matters affecting the interest of the community as a whole, with respect due to the dead, and with functions, such as marriage, which touched most nearly the welfare of all. In Rome the college of the Pontifices was the most ancient and venerable part of the legal system, dating from the time of the kings, with whom they were associated in carrying out the duties of the community towards the deities who presided over the family and the tribe. Under the republic the 'Pontifex Maximus' succeeded to the king as chief administrator of religious law and

his official dwelling was called the 'regia' or king's house. Julius Cæsar held this office for the last twenty years of his life, and from the accession of Augustus to power it was always attached to the reigning emperor. The fact that, with the decay of the empire and the rise of Christianity, the office and title passed to the Pope of Rome is the best evidence of the change from a state of things when religion and government were in the same hands, to our present ideas of dividing temporal and spiritual which is the foundation of modern liberty. But the ancient pontifices of Rome had also contact and control of many things which are still regarded as, partly at least, in the domain of the civil magistrate. They superintended all the legal patrician marriages. They looked after the law of adoption and of testamentary succession. They kept the archives and the annals, as well as regulating the calendar both astronomically and in relation to affairs of state. Naturally the care of temples and of expiatory sacrifices for pestilence or famine fell within their sphere.

Beside these definite functions which the pontifices retained more or less completely throughout Roman history, they were in early days regarded as the supreme authority in all legal questions. The respect of the law was so vital for the welfare of the state that it was put under the guardianship of those who knew the mind and will of the gods. It was for them to say what were the right days for legal or public actions—*dies fasti*—and for this purpose they consulted the auspices, the flight of birds or the appearance of the livers of sacrificial animals. They determined the form and words of legal formulæ which in the earlier law were of the utmost importance. *Certa et solemnia verba* must

be used if any legal action were to be held valid. This was true of sales, contracts, debts, emancipation of slaves—all legal actions in fact, as well as the more strictly religious functions of marriage, death, adoption and so forth. The passage indeed from this primitive practice of consecrated formulæ to a state in which the intention of the persons was to be the dominating thought, is a short summary of the history of Roman law.

There is another, and an equally suggestive way, of regarding this history as a whole. It is a signal example of the growth of humanity, or of humane feeling in social actions. The early law was cruel in the extreme. The *paterfamilias* had the power, not only of corporal punishment, but of life and death over his wife and children. He was not only allowed but enjoined to use stripes on his slaves. He could lead off to prison and slavery a defaulting debtor on the formality of seizing him and producing his person before a magistrate. One provision of the Twelve Tables appeared on the face of it so preposterous that many commentators doubted if the literal interpretation were true. It is the case of a debtor who has more than one creditor, and the law runs that "after the third market day the creditors may cut him in pieces, and any one who cuts more or less than his share shall be guiltless." A precedent, it will be seen, for Shylock's case, but more favourable to the creditor, for in Venice,

> "If the scale do turn
> But in the estimation of a hair,
> Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate."

It seems indeed to be an authentic relic of even

more barbarous times, when, as is found among other primitive people, the creditor might actually kill or mutilate his debtor.

The law of Talio—life for life or eye for eye—is common to practically all races of men and contains a rude conception of justice which is natural to the human mind. In Rome, as elsewhere in early days, the State did not necessarily take cognizance of private wrongs, and the wronged man, or his kinsmen, sought, and were expected by custom to seek, vengeance from the wrongdoer or his kin, according to the rule of Talio. Hence, in the case of killing, there arose among savage tribes the blood-feud, which might go on indefinitely, to the extermination of families. But with the Romans, at the earliest time of which we have certain knowledge, murder, or *parricidium*, had become a public crime, and there was no blood feud, though Talio governs forms of injury less than death in the Twelve Tables. Germans, Celts and other Aryan people had flourishing blood feuds for centuries after they were extinct in Rome.

The Talio clause in the Twelve Tables is interesting. "If one have broken the limb of another, and have not come to terms with him, let there be talio." So by the ancient law of England, he that maimed any man, whereby he lost any part of his body, was sentenced to lose the like part—*membrum pro membro*. A later part of the same law in the Twelve Tables assigns a money payment for the loss of certain limbs, which was also the common procedure in the law of other peoples.

Money taking the place of limb as compensation, and a public authority taking the place of the right arm of the avenger; these are the normal lines of evolution, and Rome was distinguished by

her early attainment of them—the civilization of punishment.

As we pass, under the empire, to the later forms of Roman law which have descended to modern states, their growing humanity is the most striking feature. We shall see in a moment the political steps which led to the widening conceptions of justice and humanity; but we are bound to believe also in a real change in the moral nature of the men who carried them out. Cicero, Marcus Aurelius, Papinian, had actually attained a higher level of human thought and feeling, and they were representative of many more—the better men of their age. The lines on which we may trace this development of morality, as expressed in law, are mainly, a greater respect for personality, the putting of moral ties based on affection above the strict application of legal rules, the extension of freedom and the softening of harsh primitive customs and punishments, the spread of ideas of equity, of ways of dealing based on principles applicable to, and understandable by, all men alike.

A few illustrations must suffice.* Slavery was not abolished but steps were constantly taken both to facilitate the emancipation of slaves and to recognize their personal honour and responsibility. Early in the empire a law was passed prescribing that in criminal cases the same forms of procedure should be followed with regard to the slave as to the freeman. A later law laid down that if a woman of servile origin were sold on condition that she should not be subjected to prostitution, and this condition were violated, she should be declared free. So in regard to the absolute authority

* See Vinogradoff's Essay on *The Work of Rome*, Unity Series IV. (O.U.P.)

of the father in the family system. The old law had given him *jus vitæ et necis;* he could put members of the family to death. This right had been long abrogated and was in the second and third centuries A.D. maintained only in the one case of adultery committed by a daughter. The reason given (in the Digest) is that the father is likely to exercise the power in a more humane manner than the aggrieved husband. So, in the relations of sons to fathers, the tendency was constantly to rely rather on reverence than on command and unreasoning obedience. The property of the son was gradually protected against resumption by the father; and, within the family circle, the wife and daughters are gradually admitted to rights of wardship and inheritance. The mother may in certain cases oppose the father's orders with regard to the residence of the children. The mother, grandmother and sister are allowed to bring an action (*accusatio tutoris suspecti*) against an unworthy guardian.

The famous edict of Caracalla in A.D. 212 is the best example of the spread of civic rights and freedom within the Roman sphere, to all communities on similar terms. It was won gradually from Rome, first, by her Latin allies, then, by the free population of Italy, then by all the city organizations in the Roman world. The actual words, discovered not long ago in a papyrus in Egypt were: "I grant citizenship to all foreigners within the Roman political world, with the exception of the *dediticii.* Every kind of administration remains as it is." The *dediticii* were the conquered tribes who had not yet reached the stage of city organization, and the exception will remind us strongly of the provision in our own days, in the Covenant of the League of Nations, that a mandated system of supervision

should be maintained for such populations as did not yet show a capacity for managing their own affairs. Within the Caracalla world, thus unified, the spread of common legal ideas and practices went on apace, and in no respect was this more conspicuous than in the relations of men and women. In the East marriage by written contract had been prevalent, while in the West oral consent had been the chief factor. In the East the wife's dower was regarded as her private property, while at Rome it fell into the power of the husband. The law of Athens had shown the way to the Hellenized citizens of Syria, and in the end the mind of Rome was wise and comprehensive enough to take it in. By the time when, under Constantine and Justinian, the Roman Code was taking its final shape, the doctrine of the wife's right to her separate property was included.

It has been left to the last to mention the peculiar instrument by which the Romans in their prime secured the constant widening of their ancient laws. It was a stroke of national genius, embodying that adaptable traditional aspect which is the chief feature of Roman law and gave it its vogue. To describe it briefly will enable us to recapitulate both the spirit and the outline of the story.

About the earliest dates in Roman history there is naturally some doubt, but it has been generally accepted that, by the middle of the fifth century B.C., after the fall of the monarchy, the plebs, dissatisfied with the administration of the traditional law by the patrician consuls, insisted on the publication of a written code. This was the famous Twelve Tables which schoolboys had to learn by heart down to the time of Cicero. The exact date given for its publication, by the Decemvirs appointed

for the purpose, is 451 B.C. About a century later a new magistrate was added to the consuls for the express purpose of supervising the civil law. This was the prætor, in the first case with jurisdiction in the city itself. Hence his title of Prætor Urbanus, and, being the first created, he always took precedence of the numerous other prætors afterwards appointed. About a century after the creation of the first prætor, another, called the Prætor Peregrinus, was appointed on account of the increase of the foreign population in Rome. His function was the decision of suits between foreigners, or between foreigners and citizens. On these two men, annually renewed and acting as the mouthpiece of the legal wisdom of Rome, the evolution of Roman law depended.

The procedure started in the simplest and most necessary way. The Twelve Tables were the code, and they were exhibited, inscribed on brass or wood, in the Forum. But from the first it was inevitable that special questions would arise as to the application of the law to the particular case. The rule would be too rigid, or the case presented new features not covered by the rule. Here the discretion of the prætor was called for, and it was for this very purpose that he was appointed. By his decisions, in such cases referred to him, the law began to be modified, and a new mass of 'judge-made' law was built up, much as the law of England has been built up by decisions in the courts. The process was much helped in Rome by the wise discretion which the Romans allowed to their magistrates. Being intensely law-abiding, they had at the same time the good sense to see that wide powers must be allowed to those administering the law, and responsible for the general welfare of the state.

The decisions of each prætor were officially valid only for the year of his office. It was open to his successor to take another line, and the practice was soon established for each prætor on taking office to issue his Edict, setting out the lines on which he proposed to act during his year of office. Later on a law was passed compelling him to adhere to the rules he had himself laid down, and soon the great body of previous decisions became accepted as a whole, and a Perpetual Edict was the result. The early practice, however, enabled the emperors, when in due course they succeeded to the powers of the prætors, to make laws by edict without departing from the constitution of the state.

The second prætor, Prætor Peregrinus, appointed in the middle of the third century B.C., contributed at least as much to the final form of Roman law. As it was his function to settle cases arising either between foreigners living in Rome or between a Roman and a foreigner, he could not apply the forms of the *jus civile*, which, with its strict words and ceremonies, belong only to the true-born Roman. Hence he was driven to seek out principles of equity—general rules, which would be applicable to traders and others of any country. These rules were the origin of what was afterwards called the *jus gentium* and tended to suggest the idea of a natural law common to all mankind. But, quite apart from the philosophical conceptions which began to press in about the time of Cicero, the simpler rules, invented by the Prætor Peregrinus to meet his own cases, soon commended themselves to the Prætor Urbanus. As he borrowed from his colleague for the sake of convenience, the *jus civile* began to approximate to the *jus gentium*. Rome was saturated

by her conquests, and Greece and other subject states gained a resurrection of the spirit in the later Roman law.

The mature and scientific stage of Roman law lasted from the days of Cicero, just before the Christian era, to those of Justinian and his minister Tribonian in the sixth century. Throughout that time it was the chief study and glory of the Roman intellectuals. Cicero proclaimed its philosophic and human worth. It was elaborated at the same time as the Christian religion and by men of kindred ideas and origin, often no doubt in contact with professors of the new religion. It has been noted as a striking fact that Papinian, and his friend and colleague Ulpian, perhaps the two greatest Roman jurists, were born in the second century A.D., in Syria, whence two centuries before the apostles of Christianity had set forth. Papinian, the greatest of all, was appointed to office under Marcus Aurelius, and was with Septimus Severus when he died in York in A.D. 212. He ended a useful life by a heroic death for opposing Caracalla's brutal murder of his brother Geta.

The two great jurists come half way between Cicero and the final form of the Roman law in the Digest of Justinian. In the time of the latter Christianity had been for two centuries the official religion of the empire, and we shall study in the next chapter some other manifestations of the same growth of the human spirit on the moral side.

IX

THE MORAL REVOLUTION

No period of history is discussed with such passion and difference of opinion as the Middle Ages. What is generally understood by that term is the years in Western Europe between the final collapse of the Roman Empire in the West at the end of the fifth century A.D. and the rise of modern nations and modern science in the sixteenth. There are of course many possible variations of these limits in detail, but substantially those are the main landmarks in view. It is roughly a period of a thousand, or a little over a thousand years, and one may test the general applicability of the limits by trying them on various characters who lived near the boundary lines. Thus no one would think of speaking of Queen Elizabeth, or even Henry VIII, as belonging to the Middle Ages, but might do so of Henry VI. And at the other end Constantine is certainly not of the Middle Ages while Theodoric is. This suggests, which is not far from the truth, that the main criterion of the period is the supremacy of the Catholic Church. But there are other factors. The establishment of barbarian tribes over the area of the Western Empire gives a definite date for the end of the Roman epoch, and their establishment was not directly due to the triumph of Christianity. Nor can we say at the other end of the period that the decline of the power of the Church was the only determinant of change. The rise of the nations, especially of France, England and Spain, at the end of the

fifteenth century, was the signal of a new age quite as marked as the schism or decline of the Church. Again one might find in the revival of Greco-Roman literature a conspicuous mark of a change of mind, and this is not identical with the changed position of the Church.

Still, broadly speaking, it is perfectly true that the dominance of the Catholic Church, with all it stood for, was the chief characteristic of the Middle Ages. On the civil side Europe was, during the period, slowly recovering from a state of devastation and depopulation into which it had fallen in the later years of the Empire. The central civil power being destroyed, tribal chieftains and leaders were in constant war and the Church rose as the one moderating and connecting link in the chaos. Later came the growth of the towns, often in despite of the feudal lord, and as nations settled down and towns became prosperous, a new order was announced.

It is not surprising, therefore, that judgments differ widely about the Middle Ages. There were rampant evils, often deplored by the men then living as much as by their successors. In making a judgment one should be guided, here as in other epochs, not so much by the evils as by the good. As an introduction to such an attempt, one cannot do better than recall a famous picture of mediæval times once penned by an Oxford historian,* no longer with us, who was as learned as he was impartial.

He likened the state of Europe at that time to an Alpine range on the lower slopes of which is an undergrowth, obstructive and noxious here and there, of pathless thicket. But when we ascend to the heights, there are wide snowfields and soaring peaks

* Mr. H. W. C. Davis.

from which we may survey the panorama of a new world in radiant light and with majestic outlines stretching as far as the eye can reach.

But it will be said, "How many were there who reached the heights?" and "How large is their territory compared to the swamps and thicket below?" And "What of the distant vision? Is it not a mere optical illusion, and, in any case, what chance is there of ever reaching it?"

As the answers to all these questions must differ widely, and in some cases cannot be reached at all except by faith, so our judgments of the Middle Ages will differ. Those concentrating on one side of the picture, see nothing of the other. Those on the quest for defects, see nothing of good. The preceding chapters of this book may perhaps suggest another method of approaching the subject. Just as with the Greeks and Romans it seemed possible, without a detailed narrative or an appraisement of all the known facts, to disengage some great achievement which they have left as a permanent enrichment of mankind, so it might be with the men of the Middle Ages. In the case both of Greek poetry and science and of Roman law, we are able to point to something brilliant and extraordinary which is still alive and will not be allowed to die. Can we not find something of the same sort in the Western Europe of the mediæval millennium?

The latter question is much more difficult because we are not dealing there with something accomplished by men of one race and allegiance, in their own language and a definite form. Greek poetry, Greek science, Roman law are still with us in the forms given them by their makers. These we may study and admire while their spirit still works among us. They are the characteristic works of their creators, besides being corner-stones in the temple

built by the human mind. What we are looking for in the Middle Ages cannot be quite of this order. The Western nations were in the making, and their connecting-link—the Christian Church—had its roots far away in the East. The Bible—even the New Testament—cannot be taken as this characteristic work, for it is mainly the composition of Eastern apostles, elaborated in small circles of believers before the Church had taken its final shape. Nor can it be Gothic architecture or scholastic philosophy, for the former will in the end pass away in ruin, and the latter, though a brilliant exercise in dialectics, has lost its intrinsic value through the spread of science. Men will read with curiosity what S. Thomas Aquinas thought of good and evil, and be stimulated by his intellect, but they cannot be satisfied with the answers. Where then are we to look for the great contribution of the Middle Ages to human progress, if indeed there be one?

It will be found elsewhere and by other methods, though works of art, especially the greatest, such as Dante's poems, throw light on the quest. If then we take for comparison the state of the Western world, both in life and thought, before and after the mediæval period, what are the chief changes which we should note? It will not be in knowledge, for, until the Renascence and the science and discoveries of the sixteenth century, the level of knowledge was a good deal lower than it was in Greco-Roman times. It will not be in communications or industry or the arts of life, which again were easily surpassed in various places at earlier times. It was not in physique or the care of health, which in the days of enlightened Greeks and vigorous barbarians were probably as good as at any time till recent years. Unquestionably

the chief advance made was in the moral sphere, in the way men lived together and regarded one another, and still more in the ideals which the best of them followed and cherished as to how they should live. As we shall see, these moral ideas and practice were at that time intimately linked up with the dominant religion, but it is quite possible to study and evaluate them independently of our view of the validity of the claims of Rome or of any religious authority. This is the line aimed at in the rest of this chapter.

If an exact thousand years were wanted, the fourth to the fourteenth centuries would be as good as any. The limits of the Middle Ages are rather later than that, but Dante is the best figure for summing them up, and he comes near the end. Comparing then the moral practice and theory at the beginning and end of this time, what are the points about which we may be most sure? The answer must be difficult and doubtful, as we are trying to read and sum up the lives and thoughts of millions of men and women. But we may judge with some certainty from conspicuous types, men and writings who were acclaimed and acknowledged at the time, and from the character and prosperity of institutions. Every trace should be followed, though it is perfectly sound to take leading figures and writers as typical. Dante may as properly stand for mediæval Europe, as Homer for primitive Greece or Virgil for the young imperial Rome.

The most striking general fact was the recognition in the period of a supreme authority connected with the idea of rightness and holiness. Except the occasional blasphemer, everyone was a believer in a supernatural order which had its representatives on earth. This in the case of large bodies of men

and women led to their separation from the world around them and their devotion to the religious life in separate societies. Though they sometimes intervened in public affairs, for the most part they lived in seclusion, praying and cultivating a holy life for themselves, seeing how hard it was to attain this outside. For the majority, the recognition of the divine order was confined to occasional observances, confession, the mass or festivals. But some of these were universally observed, and kept alive in men's minds the idea of a religious discipline superior to, and controlling, the moral.

It must be allowed that a strong motive for submission to these observances and this discipline was the fear of hell, and that fear of any sort is a depressing and painful source of action. Many writers have enlarged on the misery, becoming acute towards death, which must have been caused by this belief in the Middle Ages. All this may be accepted if we do not lose sight of the obvious facts on the other side. Men were not habitually miserable in these days, in spite of the constant fighting and the prevalence of pestilence and the fear of hell. So far as we can judge, they seem to have led a rather light-hearted and joyous existence. Festivals, popular dancing and singing were commoner than they are now. One was in fact quite capable of putting aside even the most terrible apprehensions and enjoying the present, with perhaps an added zest. Did not the condemned aristocrats revel most gaily the night before the guillotine? As an explanation of real moral advance, the fear of hell must be reckoned of little account; nor do we find it prominent in the best reasoned and most influential statements of mediæval belief. It is true that Dante begins with the Inferno and

devises the most exquisite tortures for the sinners whom he most strongly condemns. But he does not look to the fear of these as the most powerful motive for upward action. Love which rules all things and is the goal towards which the human heart aspires, is the master thought.

Now the most striking difference in theory between the moral scheme of the Middle Ages and that of the classical moralists is the introduction, above the old cardinal virtues about which all were agreed, of the three new theological virtues which were connected by the Church with right belief. The cardinal virtues were Justice, Prudence, Fortitude and Temperance. All men might exhibit these, and some of them, especially the first, had been glorified and made explanatory of the universe, by pagan philosophers. Thus Plato in the *Republic* finds in Justice the key to human society. Above all these, Christian theology placed the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. How far was the theoretical scheme borne out in the general beliefs and actions of the people? How far does it contain something which is of industructible value for the progress of mankind. Is this a case in which the New may safely and with justice reject the teaching of the Old?

One must notice at once that it is impossible to suggest that these 'theological' virtues are exclusively Christian in origin. Faith, Hope and Charity were in existence in some germinal form as soon as men began to live and work together, and passages can be quoted from pagan writers anticipating all the moral precepts of the New Testament. It is useful as well as interesting to look at these, as evidence of the continuity of human thought, but they do not affect the new point which is the conspicuous landmark of the Middle Ages. Virtues,

impulses or tendencies of the human spirit, which had been growing sporadically throughout man's course, were at that time taken up by a strong power—of belief and of organization—and given a new setting, a new emphasis, a new authority.

Charity was made supreme, love of God as shown by love of his creatures. The constant fighting, the brutality of the feudal life at its worst, drove many men, and women into an intensive and secluded cult of spiritual things. One sees the process actually at work in countless cases. St. Bernard throws himself impetuously and determinedly into the life of the cloister, and leads his warlike brothers and hundreds of others on the same path. Under the shelter of their vows they are—at their best and quite frequently—an example of quiet laborious devotion, preaching the theological virtues and keeping the light of learning as well as faith alive in the darkest hours. We are not asked to say whether a well-ordered state would not have been better, with St. Bernard as prime minister. To such idle hypothetical questions it is easy to give affirmative answers. It is more useful to ask how far it is due to the seclusion and organization of these men in church and cloister that the supreme virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity took their place in the minds of men.

We know that in the mediæval system each of these virtues had its theological meaning and sanction. Faith was the acceptance of the divine revelation as explained and guaranteed by the church. Hope was above all the hope of salvation in another world after death. Charity was primarily devotion to God, to the Redeemer and to his human Mother: love and service of fellow-men followed, as being equally with ourselves creatures and images of the

Divine. In each case a transformation, both of the object and of the sanction, has taken place, since mediæval times, in the minds of large masses of the inhabitants of the Western countries once under the sway of the Church, and this transformation suggests many searching questions. What was the practical value of this moral-religious system in its time? How much survives? What are the prospects of its stability and efficacy in a transformed shape?

Under each of the three great headings a few words must be ventured. In the realm of Faith, whatever beliefs be held as to the ancient dogmas of the Church, a large volume of other knowledge now claims men's adhesion. They give it with a lively Faith, although the purveyors are no longer ecclesiastics but bear the hall-mark of another hierarchy. The mediæval virtue may be fairly credited with a large part of this readiness, for much that men are now offered—an expanding Universe or a space-time continuum—does not yield in difficulty to the more obscure parts of the Athanasian creed. The modern dogma has moreover the grave disadvantage, compared with the mediæval, of being changed every year or so, sometimes within an hour in a pundit's laboratory. With mankind as a whole so ready to accept on trust statements they cannot prove, and to believe firmly in the reality of things they cannot see, one may look forward hopefully to the acceptance some day of a new and simple scientific creed. Some of its clauses begin to stand out; the universal prevalence of law in the Universe and the power of the mind to grasp it; the continuity, the potency and the eternity of Life, and man's place at the crown of it.

Hope, the second of the theological virtues, is also still with us in altered form. One cannot estimate the amount, or the precise nature, of the

hopes still entertained as to personal life after death or in other spheres, but it seems certain that here also a transmutation of the substance hoped for has taken place for very many, while Hope itself is still at least as active. Hope in this new shape gives force to the passionate socialism which is the real religion of so many men and women, East and West, at the present day. Eastern religions—Zoroaster and Judaism as well as Christianity—once taught the West a belief in a future heaven and the triumph of good. The West now sends it back to the world, fortified by the rising hopes of the industrial masses, and altered in its objective by science. Copernicus and Galileo destroyed for ever the idea of a physical heaven above the clouds, and left men to frame a new one for themselves. In doing this they have sunk their personal hopes in a larger and unselfish desire for greater happiness and a fuller life for those who come after.

But the greatest of the three was Charity. In Faith and Hope there must always be a speculative element. The supremacy of Charity rests on the fact that it is good whatever our beliefs may be, and is applicable to all men, now and always. The conception of Love, permeating and linking all things, and leading from the human to the divine, is the immortal triumph of the Catholic system, most superbly worked out in Dante's poem. It was always present in thousands of minds, even in the darkest hours of religious persecution and the most furious turmoil of religious war. It survives and will survive them. It has weighed most in the spread of Christianity among non-Christian peoples. Countries like Great Britain and the United States which have preserved the Christian tradition most respectfully and have the largest number of churches and professing Christians, are

also those where social strife is least acute and social service most abundant.

A lady writer was lately visiting the museums of Mexico and reflecting as she went on the causes of the easy triumph of Christianity in Mexico under the Spaniards in the sixteenth century. It is commonly attributed to the strong hand of the Spanish conqueror, and she was thinking of this when her eyes fell on some hideous stone images of Aztec deities, crouching and gloating over some curious objects in a bowl below them. She stopped to examine it. There was a mass of bleeding hearts, torn out of living victims, with a channel carefully cut in the side of the bowl for the fresh blood to run away.

The Spaniard too committed cruelties, but not like these; and his best loved deity was a gentle woman with a child in her arms and sublime benevolence in her face. Was not this the strongest argument for changing a god?

Dante's apotheosis of Beatrice is the human equivalent of this sublimation of love in the Catholic system. As the love of men and women is the strongest of the many emotions all grouped together under the name of 'love', so it received in that system the strongest checks and became in its transformed shape the most compelling impulse. Men vowed their lives and often lived them in devotion to a woman, while countless women, away from the world, found a divine Spouse in the cloister. Marriage, as well as love, took on a new and more spiritual form which is familiar to us in countless examples from Shakespeare onwards. The change is due to the disciplining of the emotions, to the notions and practice of chivalry, to the exaltation of the female type in the Blessed Virgin,

and to the general spread of kindly feeling and the better protection of the weak. Women and children both profited in the end, but the first and most striking transformation was in the normal and life-long relation of man to woman. Before the Christian era, though doubtless there were many passionate attachments, and, in the married state, many happy and affectionate unions and respected wives, there was nothing comparable to the wooing of a woman by a man as his friend for life, his companion in love and his moral superior. But this became, after that thousand years of mediæval discipline, the accepted standard for Western men. It still remains the most enthralling and satisfying human thought both in fact and fiction. Who can sanely deny that the result is mainly due to the working of Christian discipline and feeling?

In speaking of the relations of men and women under the heading of Charity, one is specializing in the most intense sense. But the wider fields of kindly and affectionate feeling would afford similar illustrations of expansion and intensification in Christian times. The change which then took place and is to be connected with religion, is the capital contribution of these centuries to human development. It merits the name of a revolution as fully as do the industrial changes of the last two hundred years, or the scientific changes which began in the sixteenth century. The treatment of children and animals and the gradual emancipation of slaves come within the same orbit. No one would think in any of these cases of seeking in Christian teaching the sole cause of the change. There are many causes of every social event and plenty of instances in non-Christian times and countries of conduct and sentiment which we are inclined to call Christian. Yet it is true to say that the strongest impulse in

each case came from the religiously-minded. The command, "Suffer little children to come unto Me," was repeated, and is still repeated, with more effect all over the world than the wider command of loving all men. The exposure of children, which has been a common practice in the world and was authorized by leading exponents of Greek thought, became in the new dispensation an unthinkable horror. Life was sacred as the gift of God, and in the form of the young child it offered everything which could appeal to the compassion, the interest, the sense of ownership and the hopes of the adult. To-day, as the storehouse of the history of the living Universe, the child gains a unique position, the meeting point of the deepest speculation and the tenderest feeling.

In another direction the sacredness of life in Christian thought made a profound change in morality and law. Suicide became both a sin and a crime. The Greeks, and other pre-Christian thinkers, had differed on this, and, while in some cases suicide might be thought, as with the Japanese, to be an act of heroic self-punishment or self-vindication, with others, as Socrates, it was regarded as the theft of something which we owe to our fellow-men. This was clearly an avenue to the Christian doctrine which, making God the Father of the human family, added a fresh sanction to the human duty.

The example is one of many which might be given of the way in which the idea of 'sin' came in to fortify what had before been regarded as an offence against the duty one owed, either to one's self or to one's fellows. It was no new thing for men to think of certain acts as 'sinful' in the sense of being transgressions against the rights or

injunctions of an Unseen Power. This was an idea as old as human thought. The new fact was, that in the Christian dispensation this idea of 'sin' was brought much nearer to the dictates of the moral law, and was enforced by the terrors and the prestige of a universal church.

This strong and long-continued effort to impose unity and discipline from above is the most striking feature of the mediæval church, and we saw that the church was the outstanding institution of that age. It becomes therefore a matter of profound interest to the student of history to estimate the meaning, the result, the permanent possibility of such action. On this men differ widely and with good reasons. To some the whole effort was futile, largely hypocritical and generally misdirected. So far as personal morality is concerned, it seems that the breaches in the Middle Ages were as flagrant as the great successes. And yet one must believe—judging by the wide improvement which succeeded the attempt, that on the whole the movement was greatly to the good. Much has been gained for the moral advance of mankind, which will remain, whatever the new basis on which it is to rest. So far as discipline is concerned —the sort of discipline which the mediæval priest imposed—our current habits turn more and more against it. Dictators have arisen, not to save souls but to build up nations, and wherever free and progressive thought is allowed to run, it protests against any form of restraint, above all restraint imposed at the behests of one supreme institution, claiming authority from on high. But an impartial critic will remark that, however faulty the methods of the Church, however insecure the basis of its authority, the aim was towards

something in itself of priceless value and permanently needed by mankind. Our passions and instincts must be somehow mastered and, though it may well be that no one great religious organization will ever again attempt the task, it does not follow that the task should be abandoned. There are many helps and substitutes for the mediæval unitary rule—the law, the approbation of our fellows, associations and churches of every hue. They are, and should be, helps towards the attainment of a more perfect personal ideal,—the voluntary subordination of all one's powers to a governing object outside the self. That is the nobler way, but, so far as mediæval discipline assisted and led up to it, it deserves commemoration and respect.

In its work for unity the mediæval church stirs many diverse feelings in the modern student. When we hear Bernard, the statesman monk, thundering at some king or duke to do some doubtful thing, because the Pope happened to have been persuaded to recommend it, or hectoring Abelard into silence because a majority of obscure passages in the Fathers might be cited against him, we feel a passion of disapproval and disgust. "Let freedom and justice flourish," one thinks, *si ruat coelum.* But, on the other hand, in the present need of more unity in the world, the words and spirit of Dante, and the whole higher atmosphere of Catholic thought, are a delight and inspiration. Much of the *De Monarchia* might well be inscribed on the walls of the new Palace of Peace at Geneva, though in our days the difficulties have been increased a thousandfold by the complexities of the modern problem. This matter is to be discussed more fully in a later chapter, and only a few words can here anticipate it. That unity only should be imposed

by force which is needed for the peaceful existence of a society, whether of the nation or, ultimately, of the commonwealth of all nations. So much is essential—an ordered and settled framework in which the free life and thought of mankind may work. For unity of thought quite other means are needed—discussion, the intercourse of men and nations, agreement based on the free exercise of reason. In this matter, though still admiring their spirit at its best, we must depart still further from the mediæval pioneers.

X

THE TECHNICAL ADVANCE

THE accepted sequence is; Mediæval period, of which something was said in the last chapter, Renascence and Reformation, with break-up of the old order and the rise of sovereign states, and then a period called the Industrial Revolution spreading from England outwards and leading to the present mechanized and, rather imperfectly, unified modern world. This corresponds roughly to certain realities in the case, and we propose to take up the accustomed story in the next chapter, with some remarks on the modern states which arose from the mediæval order and the national spirit which they engendered and on which they rest. But, before doing this, it may be refreshing to take a passing glance on another and much neglected aspect of the same transitional period and consider some prospects of the human mind and hand which link up mediæval with modern times, and belong to all nations, whatever their political sovereignty may be, and whether they acknowledge the Pope as their religious chief or not. In tracing the onward march of the human race as a whole, it is obviously necessary to take special note of those forms of human activity in which all have shared and which override all sectional differences. Science, of course, is one of those interests—theoretically the most important—and a chapter or two might well have followed this, on the great revival of science in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But that work has been done so well and amply in other special books that it will be better to turn for a moment to another side of human

activity, close akin to science, but even more neglected in the general presentation of history.

From the first, the mental development of man has been closely linked up with his invention and elaboration of tools. One of his most familiar definitions is the 'tool-using' or, at least, the 'tool-making animal.' This was duly mentioned in our third chapter, and it might have been traced in all the ages since the beginning of civilization down to the Greeks, with their toy steam-engine, and the Romans with their medical and carpentry tools, often strikingly anticipating our own. There can be no doubt, when one surveys the stable and colossal works executed by generations of men before our era, that the fundamental principles of the relation between human force and matter had been already grasped in practice and the most fundamental tools invented. The wheel, the wedge, the lever, had been long in use before the mathematicians began to express their action in formulæ. Later on, the men of theory began to make suggestions to the men of practice, and one quite sound way of summarizing the whole of history would be to say that it has turned on abstract thought becoming constantly more intimate with, and finally controlling the making and the use of tools.

The Middle Ages, which were considered in the last chapter mainly from the moral and religious standpoint, afford many interesting examples of this nascent technology—or science of tools—which has grown without a break ever since and is now the practically dominant force in the world. The engineer in all his branches now holds the thunderbolts, and it is for humanity, as a new Prometheus, to direct the force with foresight, to beneficent ends. Of all inventions which have tended to make man's practice

more scientific, perhaps the first place should be given to the clock. This dates from the Middle Ages. In the earliest human world men no doubt measured time simply by the sun and stars, while, from the days of the Egyptians to the Greeks and Romans, various devices with sand and water were employed, which were necessarily rough and very limited in their scope. The clock proper—a train of wheels moved by a spring or weight—came from somewhere to Europe, some time before the thirteenth century. Bishops and abbots specially favoured them, no doubt for regularity in the services. The earliest known in England was put up at Westminster by 1288, to regulate a peal of bells, and Henry VIII, among his other dissipations, disposed of the metal. The primitive ingenuity of the first simple escapement was great, and science came in with Galileo and the pendulum three hundred years later. Here is a magnificent subject for a lesson, or series of lessons, strictly historical, with the social and intellectual reactions of the clock as its culmination.

Other inventions of capital importance crowd into those centuries, before the Industrial Revolution was named or thought of. And it is of profound interest and human meaning to note that all of them have their roots much further back again, often in pre-historic times. It is hard to choose between the multitude of these old-new things which became prominent at that time, for the transformation of society and the enlargement of the mind. Glass, going back to the Egyptians or, according to the story, to the Phœnician seamen, re-established itself, after a lapse at the breakdown of the Roman Empire, more beautifully than before, especially at Murano near Venice. The Italians took the lead in this as in many other things, rescued from older civilizations and improved.

Glass takes a high place in the development both of art and science; and at the beginning of the Renascence Italy stood first in both. Without glass and its later glories, can we imagine the Gothic cathedral that we know? Without glass, all the subsequent discoveries of science, with the telescope, the microscope and photography, could not have taken place. It is perhaps the most conspicuous and conclusive case of the dependence of science on technology, and of the continuity of new with old, back to times lost in legend.

On another side, glass has had great social value in lightening the home and giving to every one his most powerful instrument for alleviating his most inevitable infirmity. Joined to the printing press, spectacles have extended his capacity for learning and enjoyment, as long as life; and like the clock, spectacles go back to the Middle Ages. They are often ascribed to Roger Bacon who certainly understood the principle of their construction. Here again is a case of persistent ingenuity, gradually inventing a crude mechanism which at the touch of science was to be transformed and indefinitely enlarged. Galileo came, four centuries after Bacon, and mankind began to look through glasses round the universe.

Mills, moved first by wind and water, and then, in more fully mechanized times, by steam and electricity, tell a similar story. Some sort of turning apparatus for grinding and crushing must be as old as civilization itself. The Romans had water mills which diminished in number as the Empire broke up. They revived again, with more settled and prosperous conditions, and are a prominent feature in mediæval life. Domesday records some five thousand in England alone at the end of the eleventh

century. At the same time the windmill came into use, a less effectual means of doing similar work where water-power was scarce. Both these, and especially the windmill, were popular in their social effects, for who could claim a monopoly of the wind? But their uncertainty and their limited range led to their decline, when steam began its vaster work at the end of the eighteenth, and the dynamo in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The list of such inventions and their similar story might be extended almost without limit. If one were asked what four or five things have done most to transform an antique into a modern world, the answer would probably be, the compass, gunpowder, the Arabic numerals, paper and the printing press. All of these, if not definite discoveries in the Middle Ages, are first spoken of then. All of them are impersonal and international in origin. One puts the compass first, partly because the first definite mention of it comes before the first definite mention of gunpowder, partly because the place of honour is due rather to the thing which has brought men together than to that which has brought them to an untimely grave. The compass has been often claimed for the Chinese, but many people independently must have noticed the property of the lodestone, or of a piece of iron touched by a lodestone, to turn north and south. This magnetic power of a certain oxide of iron, found in great quantities in several parts of the world, gives us a link with the discoveries relating to electricity which have wrought such vast changes, practical and theoretical, in our own days. The first discovery was no doubt made accidentally, in some such way as in the Phœnician story of the discovery of glass on the seashore. The first reliable reference to the use of a magnetic

needle for the guidance of ships comes from the twelfth century, and it must imply long previous knowledge. It looks as if we owe its introduction into Europe to the Arabs, who gave us our present numerals. They may have gained it from the Chinese, but no one can say. As the Chinese continued to use an inferior form of the compass, and described it in different terms, an independent origin seems likely. Here again the Italians were the pioneers, so far as Europe is concerned.

Leaving gunpowder for the moment, and thinking still of the inventions which have diffused knowledge and brought mankind closer together, the first place must undoubtedly be given to the printing press. To this invention the East contributed largely.* China first experimented with block printing and produced the first paper. From Japan we have the earliest block prints in existence. Korea first printed with metal type cast from a mould, while people of Turkish race were the chief agents in carrying block printing across Asia. It is known that block printing was carried on in Persia and Egypt before it began in Europe, while the Arabs were again the transmitters of paper-making from China to Europe.

Men have disputed long and keenly about the priority in printing of Germany or Holland, Gutenberg or Koster, or the superiority of the presses of Germany and Italy in the fifteenth century. They speak as if Europe alone performed this marvel, and, if English, they may quite easily believe that Caxton did the work and Edward IV encouraged him in Westminster. In fact, the invention, like all the most fundamental things in human progress, was built up by the co-operation of a multitude of

* See Thomas R. Carter's *The Invention of Printing in China and its Spread Westward* (Columbia University Press).

active-thinking brains over a period of many centuries. The East was still ahead of the West when it first appeared, and the West in our own days has carried it to further extreme degrees of mechanization. But it was as universal in its origin as it is now in its diffusion. Germany had far the largest number of presses at the end of the fifteenth century when printing began to do its revolutionary work in Europe; and Italy, as in other forms of art, produced the most beautiful work.

Italy, the centre in the earlier Middle Ages of the political struggle between Pope and Emperor, became later the focus of the streaming light and vigorous new life which poured into her from all quarters, especially by sea from the East, and, after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, from wandering Greek scholars. Of this new world of pregnant thought the brain of Leonardo da Vinci was most full and most typical. It is interesting to note, as one of the useful meeting points in chronology, that his birth coincides almost exactly with the fall of Constantinople and the dispersion of the Greeks. He was born in 1452, being, of course, much more than a mere mirror or focus of his times. No human brain was ever so fertile and many-sided in a creative and practical sense. It is difficult to say whether he was greater as a thinker or as an artist. Architect, sculptor, painter and engineer, no one exhibits more clearly in his own person the intimate connexion between actual constructive work and the imaginative use of the mind. He devised himself some good dozen of inventions which have since become popular and useful—pumps, ship-logs, power-looms and many others, and, from the flight of birds, designed a flying machine which in his hands remained a sketch.

The same brain worked, too, in studying the anatomy of animals, the traces and meaning of fossils, the laws of motion and their relation to sound and light. The later perfecting and elaboration of the things he sketched, make it now impossible for any human brain to compass the same range, but do not diminish the stimulus of his example. His life and thought, moreover, are of deep historical significance, for though the most brilliant all-round genius the world has ever seen, he built on others' work and was happy and genial with other men, learning and communicating what he learnt. Neither in art nor in life was he revolutionary nor irreverent. His pictures idealize religious subjects familiar to the men of his own world and time. The practical work, on which he chiefly lived, was that needed by the rulers and people of the day—great hydraulic and irrigation works in Lombardy, fortifications for Duke Ludovico Sforza of Milan. With all this he was constantly engaged in scientific speculations, deep broodings on the nature and destiny of man and all he saw around him. Such a man prefigures the modern spirit, and strengthens our confidence in human nature, more than the conquerors of the greatest battles or the founders of the greatest states.

It will be noticed that this supremely human and pacific mind was compelled by the exigencies of his life to turn his ingenuity to works of war as well as works of peace. Besides his engineering achievements in fortification, he is credited with the invention of a submarine boat and a breech-loading cannon. Such intermixture of constructive work with the planned destruction of human life has gone on so far throughout the course of history, and the last great war was no exception to the rule.

It stimulated invention more than any other, though it does not fall within the scope of this chapter to give the proof. At the end of the Middle Ages, however, at the time just preceding Leonardo, inventions of this kind had a political importance which has now disappeared, or is fast disappearing. They contributed to the building of the nations which is to be described more fully in the next chapter. In feudal days, without heavy armaments, or explosive weapons of any kind, the local baron could often hold his nominal chief in check and play at war every summer with his neighbours. Swords, bows and arrows meant constant, though comparatively, harmless wars, and invested all wars with a halo of personal skill and romance and all contests with a touch of war. Gunpowder, with its interminable sequel, has changed all that. It put overwhelming strength into the hands of the man, or the nation, who could raise most funds to equip heavy guns, to undermine fortresses, to level walls with the ground and exterminate or drive off the field any force, less well equipped, or relying mainly on hand-wielded arms. Hence gunpowder among mediæval inventions has the highest national importance, for it enabled the feudal sovereigns of the thirteenth century to become the absolute rulers of the seventeenth, and, as the nations gained solidity, it enabled the stronger nations to ride rough-shod over the weaker and the well-armed West to oppress the East. By that time the tables had been turned, and the comparative barbarian of the Crusades had become the intellectually better trained and materially far more powerful Westerner of modern times.

Gunpowder played a part, though not the all-important part which some writers would suggest. It is mentioned, like many nobler matters, first in the

thirteenth century and in the works of Roger Bacon, who gives a recipe for mixing saltpetre with sulphur which would form an explosive and create fire at a distance. That was the capital difference in which the invention consisted and marked it off from the incendiary mixtures which had been famous as 'Greek fire' in earlier years. The first certain proof of its use in war is found in a Florentine document of 1326 appointing persons to superintend the manufacture of cannons and iron balls for the defence of the territory. In England the use of cannon by Edward III is one of the commonplaces of history.

The cannon at Creçy were a clear and familiar proof of the use of technical skill, in strengthening the feudal monarch and fortifying one rising nation against another. They thus assisted in building up the strong nations of which we speak in the next chapter. But this is merely one aspect of the technical advance of mankind throughout the ages. It touches all sides of human life. As we pass on to later periods we see it building up the great combinations of capital which are so prominent a feature of the nineteenth and the present century. We see it too knitting up the world in the mechanical ties of to-day and mechanizing too a larger and larger part of the daily activities of men as well as their more ideal arts. It prints their pictures by millions and by doing so has blotted out many of the finer individual traits which marked the ancient workmen of the East and the Leonardos of the West. But, while it has smoothed out and levelled down in one direction, it has immeasurably raised the living condition of the mass. Life is easier, longer and more enjoyable for the great majority in all civilized lands and this must be attributed to advance in

technology in its widest sense, continually more inspired and directed by science. It is for the future to correct the evils and draw the balance. To the historian, tracing things further and further back to their source, the most fascinating and significant thought is the continuity of the process. He may go, as we have seen in all these cases from the Middle Ages, back to the most authentic appearance of the thing which he is studying, and yet there is something earlier still, till the source itself is lost beneath the soil of legend and unrecorded effort. The old is always receding on the one hand, while the new, which we know has come from it, is growing so mightily around us that we sometimes tremble in the midst of the wonder and confidence which are the first thoughts to arise in the mind. That they should also be the last and most permanent reactions, we hope to show in a later chapter.

XI

THE GROWTH OF NATIONS

THE last chapter was a link, forged from another mine, between an older world where one spiritual chief, with a somewhat shadowy temporal counterpart at his side, was supreme over at least Western Europe, controlling the thoughts and destinies of all its inhabitants, and another order, where vigorous national states gained control, sometimes entirely repudiating the old spiritual authority, in every case deciding for themselves the bulk of causes which in the Middle Ages the Church had claimed as its own. On the political side this is the clear dividing point between old and new in modern Europe. The Middle Ages pass, and modern times begin, when the authority of the Pope in public affairs tends to disappear, and the States themselves, under vigorous rulers, enter on an era of expanding nationalism.

This nationalism and the nationalist spirit are, of course, subjects of warm debate, as warm as the merits of the mediæval church. To many thinkers they appear as an almost unmitigated curse; one may read Mr. Wells' *Outline of History* without finding a word of appreciation. On the other hand, there is a school, more political in its instincts, ably represented by Mr. Ramsay Muir, who, writing during the War, speaks of nationalism as the saving virtue of a world threatened by race hatreds and devouring imperialism. Can one arrive, on a purely historical path, at any true perspective between so widely divergent views? What is a nation? How have nations arisen? What have they done, what may

they do towards general progress? Where can they find the necessary limits to their powers, the common end and inspiration for concerted action?

A nation is essentially a collection of human beings, who have lived, worked and suffered together for a considerable time. They are by no means necessarily of the same race, nor always speak the same language. But they do—with the one doubtful exception of the Jews—always live in one country, and have invariably a strong attachment to that piece of the earth's surface. The local attachment and the common life are in fact the two necessary components—a sort of space-time *continuum*.

There are historically some very interesting general facts about nations. You cannot speak of them in any strict sense until after the break-up of the Roman Empire. The Greeks were certainly not a nation; nor the Romans, as a conquering city, gradually extending its authority and alliances throughout the world. Nations, in the simple sense suggested above, only arose within the big aggregates of authority, as that authority began to relax or be broken down. The nation, proud and self-sufficient as it may try to be, historically therefore always presupposes the larger entity. As we know them, nations arose in the West, within the area of the Catholic Church and the Roman Empire, and owe their corporate existence and consciousness to the fact that there were at the same time similar communities of men, feeling much as they did and also within the same larger unit. The case is closely parallel to that of the individual man, who becomes conscious of himself only by virtue of others around him within the same society.

As thus defined, England is historically the first of nations. She was in the larger unit, being for

four hundred years Romanized, and brought into the Roman religious circle by Augustine and Theodore of Tarsus and later by William the Conqueror and Lanfranc. But, being an island and having a specially vigorous and independent type of inhabitants, she began to break away from the Roman dominion before the rest, and settled down, before the rest, as a united and self-determining community.

There has always been fighting in the making of a nation, always a growing unity within itself, always inclusion within a larger whole. Just as the Middle Ages might well be told as a story circling round the Catholic Church, so the subsequent period, which is generally regarded as Modern History, may be quite accurately grouped round the growth of Nations. Hence, though many to-day denounce nationality as a wholly mischievous thing, and would have but one state in the world, and many others find in the Catholic Church nothing but an engine of intellectual oppression, the historian must take another view. Indeed, as the leading manifestation of human activity for two great epochs, they must both contain something of vital importance for the building up of human life. What this is in the case of the Nations, may be best seen by noting in turn how each arose, what were the surrounding circumstances in Europe, and how each nation has justified its existence by its deeds.

England and France were almost contemporary in attaining their nationhood, though England, for the reasons just stated, may rightly be given priority. During the Hundred Years War, which followed the establishment of a common legal system and a comprehensive House of Commons in England, the French were still divided into hostile feudal groups. The unification of France and her complete nation-

hood date from the fifteenth century, when Joan of Arc kindled a new spirit and Louis XI effected the annexation of many outlying fiefs to the royal domain. By the sixteenth century the Tudor Elizabeth and the 'politic' Henry of Navarre could join hands as the heads of the two best united and most advanced nations of the West.

The nationhood of Spain was finally achieved about the same time, after a series of devastating conflicts which left Spain, in spite of her conquests in the New World, an impoverished and backward neighbour of the two nations to the north. Being for centuries governed by a small Mohammedan minority, and struggling constantly to throw off their rule, she gained her unity by more fighting than any of the other nations, and lost in the process some centuries of internal prosperity and education. She gained a character and a romantic past, but bears to this day the scars of her troubles. Moreover, the Catholic Sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, who completed the unity of Spain by the conquest of Granada, left her also a burdensome heritage in two respects. She became, as the age-long Crusader against the Moor, the most fanatic and invincibly Catholic of the larger nations. And acquiring, through cleverly arranged marriages, dominions elsewhere, especially in the Netherlands, she was for centuries fighting costly and ruinous wars to maintain them. Holland, and ultimately Belgium, sealed their freedom and their nationhood by these conflicts, but for Spain they were a running sore.

In the long run, Spain will leave most impress on history by her invasions and conquests in the New World. Portugal, already a nation, had led the way, and it was partly an accident that the decisive voyage of Columbus in 1492 took place under

Spanish auspices. But the crusading spirit of Spain, and the fact of many men-at-arms being unoccupied after the war with Granada, had much to do with the result. The conquest was in its early stages more a crusade than a search for gold, and the difference of spirit between Spanish and English colonizers in this and other respects has led to interesting differences in the sequel. With all their occasional cruelties, the Spanish Catholic conquistadores succeeded in transforming the life of the natives much more completely. There was abundant intermarriage and widespread conversions. Now—a hundred years after the violent breaking away of the Spanish colonies from their allegiance—the sentimental linguistic and religious ties are reviving and a group of Spanish-American nations is arising in America, culturally and economically allied with their motherland. The English parallel will be discussed in the next chapter.

One cannot of course attempt to recount the birth story of all the nations. Even the most famous of all—Switzerland—must pass here with the briefest notice—her unbroken heroism, her humanity to others and the happy union which she offers of three racial stocks and three languages. Her history is that of the drawing together of bits of three imperial kingdoms—Germany, Italy and Burgundy—in a common desire to secure union within and freedom without. The Forest Cantons, originally German in race and speech, gradually made good their independence of the Hapsburg Empire by sturdy fighting, and were formally acknowledged free in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The French and Italian-speaking elements are admitted to equality in the federation early in the nineteenth century.

The eighteenth century is not distinguished by the

birth of nations. The colonizing and dynastic powers were busy fighting among themselves, though, towards the end, two events occurred which were destined to have the greatest effect on the growth of nationalities in later years. The first was the severance of the political tie between the American colonies and their mother-country; the other the temporary destruction of Poland as a nation, by the grasping and unscrupulous action of her stronger neighbours, Russia, Prussia and Austria. The former case became to the whole world a shining beacon of persistent independence, triumphing at last over great odds and long prestige in the mother states. It had a powerful influence on the course of the French Revolution, and, with certain lapses, the United States have stood ever since for the 'self-determination' of nations, which their President made a battle-cry in 1917.

But the success of the United States was a less powerful motive to nationalists in the nineteenth century than the attempted murder of Poland. For Poland was a nation of a type most calculated to move the sympathetic emotions of mankind. It was passionately united, with a common language and a popular religion, held and taught by people who regarded their religion as part of the nation's soul. It had been fallen upon in its hour of weakness by Powers—not yet entitled to be called 'nations'—who were all governing their own territories in complete disregard of popular rights. The fragments of a living nation, thus dismembered, were simply to be added to an autocrat's domain. No wonder therefore that Polish exiles, and the name of Poland, became a leaven of nationalist fervour throughout the West.

France and England, each in her own way, and not without selfish lapses, favoured throughout the

century the formation of new national units. Thus the French were more interested in the revival of Poland, while England did more to secure the independent unity of Italy. Within the century, besides a new Germany and Italy, Belgium, Greece, Servia, Roumania and Bulgaria arose, the new Balkan nations being born from the disintegration of their Turkish master; and in the Balkan region the ambitions, as well as the sympathy, of the Russian Christians did much to hasten the event. In all these cases it should be noticed that diplomacy was at work, the diplomacy of what was then called the 'European Concert', which intervened fitfully between the unstable unity of the Middle Ages and the League of Nations still to be born.

It is necessary to bear this in mind because, as noted above, the very idea of a nation implies the existence of other similar societies within the same larger whole. Thus, all the new nations of the nineteenth century were in some sense adopted into a comity. The one case of which this is least true—the new German Empire—has been, through that very cause, the most difficult to assimilate ever since its formation. For the Second Reich was made mainly by war, and, though some fighting has gone into the composition of all nations, in all other cases the fighting was but a subordinate element, and the nation was born of a natural union of its people, approved and accepted by the comity of nations.

The story thus moves on to the largest comity of nations ever assembled or attempted, in the League of Nations.

It was clearly inevitable that the freedom of uniting together and, subject to the general consent, controlling their own affairs, would in the end be

allowed to all considerable groups of men desiring it, and qualified as the other groups were, who had already achieved this position. Nor could the process stop with Western Europe where it had begun. In the East, Japan had been for ages a nation *in posse*, waiting only for contact with Western thought and activity in order to realize her own powers. This happened in the last third of the nineteenth century, when so many new national units were being formed in Europe. By fighting with Russia she consolidated her strength and increased her pride, and in the Great War took her place naturally and actively with the Western nations. China was, and remains, rather a case apart. She had been united for centuries under various houses of imperial rulers. She had, in spite of many popular tongues, a common culture and way of life. She looked back to many common heroes, teachers of morality and philosophy rather than fighting men. Yet one could not, in the simple sense suggested above, speak of her as a nation, mainly because, being so vast and so remote, she had never come into any comity with other nations. She was a world rather than a country, ignoring the existence of other peoples, often actually disbelieving in their reality, when occasional reports of them came in. The breakdown of the unitary imperial system about twenty years ago dissolved the huge territory into warring sections. Its great size had always prevented the growth of the intense cohesion and loyalty which mark Japan, and one may, at the best, have hopes of a new nation arising from the 'Westernized' government now trying to extend its power from Nanking. Should it succeed, it would be perhaps the most striking example in the world of the transformation of Old by New.

In smaller units, Asia has been approaching the Western conception of nations more easily. Persia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Turkey are all promising instances. In Syria and Palestine one can speak with less confidence at the moment, owing to the acute conflict of various racial elements in both of them. But it must be noted, in confirmation of what was said above as to the need of a larger whole to contain and stimulate the smaller, that the formation of the League of Nations in 1919 led to the greatest spate of new nations which history relates. Nearly all the nations—new and old—belong to it, and its existence has been a goal for the ambition of the smaller units to qualify for admission, and to exercise their influence when admitted.

In this, one of the main objects of its existence, the League has been a conspicuous success. None of these would-be members desire admission in order to carry on war with their neighbours. They desire, no doubt, to strengthen themselves, and to have behind their national ambitions the support and prestige of the largest organization in the world. There is no offence in any corporate body desiring to become stronger, so long as it respects the similar ambitions of others. That the League has not always been able to realize fully the latter condition of membership is not surprising, when one considers the novelty of the task and the enormous complexity of the circumstances. One may note rather with satisfaction that of the three great nations not at the moment in formal co-operation with the League, two—Germany and Japan—are avowedly dissident because of warlike actions or propensities, and the third—the United States—though not a formal member—is in heartiest accord when definite proposals for useful co-operation

are put forward. Fifty-four nations to two is a larger balance for peaceful progress than the world has yet seen, larger than any optimist would have predicted in the winter of 1916.

It is time to return to the simple definitions of nationality from which we started, and to attempt to draw from them some practical conclusions as to the working of nations in an international world. Two permanent and natural movements or organisations among mankind have gained strength, and worked very rapidly, in the last hundred years. They are not in themselves contradictory, as superficial arguing would make out, but complementary and necessary, one to the other; the nation, or smaller aggregate of congenial persons, and the larger union of all nations. It was quite proper, and to be expected, that the two sorts of union should wax strong together. Consider the essential necessity of nationhood. The majority of things, in which men must or may help one another, if general progress is to be made, must be done locally, whatever the supreme and distant world-organisation might be. If we had Mr. Wells' world-state, and were all rolled out into cosmopolitan items, we should still need to educate ourselves, to care for our sick, to relieve our poor, to maintain our roads and our historic monuments—locally. And if that is done in the right spirit, of doing it as well, or better, that other local aggregates, you have at once what is commonly called 'national pride.' In no conceivable sense is such work hostile, or could be injurious, to the other local aggregates of men, whom we may be allowed for convenience sake to call 'nations.' Take the analogy of schools. It is a source of intense happiness, and a powerful stimulus to work, to belong to an entity larger than one's self, which is not too remote to be realized with affection, or

too large to be comprehended by immature minds, which has its living personalities and its concrete monuments visible to all. No healthy person, feeling all this, can feel, as a necessary result of it, any spite towards those who own another *alma mater*. There may be a tinge of pity, turning, in the case of the generous, into an active desire that every one might have as good a home, and, in the case of the superior person, into a certain contempt for those who have not. But he cannot sanely wish to attack them.

There are, of course, many possible causes of conflicts, both between nations and other aggregates of men, which by no means conform to any standard of sanity. Among these must be noted, not only the greed or arrogance of the stronger but also the restless ambition of newer, less wealthy or privileged members of the whole community. Thus, while the greater Powers were all standing by, armed to the teeth, it was the fanaticism of one small dissatisfied group which fired the train at Serajevo, and precipitated the Great War. With such risks at hand, the stronger forces should always be ready and determined to limit the mischief, and, above all, not to attempt to derive advantage from the confusion for themselves. How far this was from being the case in 1914, is only too well known to every one. A pacific resolution on the part of the majority, especially of the most powerful of the majority, is what the world most needs, and the League of Nations has, since the War, provided better machinery for securing this than civilization has yet enjoyed. Further questions as to world unity and international organization will be discussed in a later chapter.

The growth of nations and their exuberant activities in recent years attract most interest, and raise most

alarm, in the minds of those concerned for the peaceful progress of the world as a whole. They appear as one of the two greatest menaces, the other being the triumph of the machine, both in industry and in dictated thought. In each case it is essential for a sound judgment to study the threatening evils as part of a whole, and not to omit the counterbalancing, and often stronger, constructive elements through a righteous attention to the debit side of the account. One instance out of a possible thousand must suffice. It is as obvious that the world is being internationalized in these days, as that new nations are active. The world is growing smaller before our eyes with every fresh triumph of aviation or the wireless. Such is the inevitable result of the applications of science to which all nations are contributory, and which is in essence the extension of man's senses and muscles, the stretching out of eyes and ears and arms indefinitely into space. We thus all become much closer neighbours. But closer proximity does not, always and necessarily, produce more harmonious feelings, and international aviation has, while primarily linking us closer together, at the same time aroused petty difficulties and friction due to the supposed rights and interest of nationality. Some countries are attempting to limit the rights of other countries in flying over them. There is as yet no generally accepted authority, organization or convention to harmonize conflicting claims and make the new discovery as widely useful as possible. This is the obstructive, harmful side of nationality and it calls for constant effort on the part of men of good will to make the general interest prevail. Yet in itself aviation is one of the most powerful potential agents for international union that the world has seen.

One general observation of a cheering kind is a

safe inference from history. Those nations which have secured the best, most united and stable internal constitution are also the best internationalists. There seems to be no exception to this rule, nor is the reason hard to find. When unhappy at home, we tend naturally to spread our unhappiness abroad and visit our troubles on our neighbours, either by blaming and insulting them, or by trying to take from them something which may possibly satisfy our own discontent. Examples of such dangerous inclinations might be readily cited, but shall be nameless here. But of the other type a few shall be mentioned. No more satisfactory States can be found in the world to-day than the Scandinavian countries, to which one should in justice add Switzerland. Holland and Sweden, especially, have carried to the furthest point the application of science to their social welfare. Their housing, education, vital and economic statistics lead the world, with the possible exception of New Zealand, also a happily united country. It will be noticed that in all these cases the internal happiness has been secured by the liberal treatment of differing elements, the various provinces and religions in Holland, the socialists and aristocrats in Sweden, the Maoris in New Zealand. Always, where this is the case within the nation, the same spirit is forthcoming from that nation towards other peoples.

To live contentedly together, respecting mutual claims and using common resources for the common good, is not always easy for the large numbers who make up a modern nation. The discoveries of science while vastly increasing the power of social action for the right-minded, have at the same time made it easier for the selfish to exploit or attack his neighbours if he is ill-disposed and not restrained. Right action in complicated circumstances

needs careful practice, and careful practice needs time.

Apply this factor of time and see, first, how it has worked in the group of Scandinavian countries which are now happily united as nations, and strongly imbued with a sound international spirit; secondly, how it may be expected to work, in the case of the Balkan group which are at present in a state of unrest and admittedly one of the most likely centres of a European war. Four centuries ago the Scandinavian area was even more disturbed. The Netherlands were chafing under a foreign rule which prevented their acquiring the habit of united self-government essential to a nation. Sweden, Norway and Denmark were constantly plunged into wars, partly intestine, partly the result of external aggression which could not lead to permanent peace. All this has passed away, and in the course of time the natural forces of industry, peaceful neighbourliness and goodwill to others have asserted their sway. There is no reason to forbid the hope that the same result may be achieved in far less time and with far less expense of blood and treasure in the Balkans. There, too, are the elements of prosperous nationalities—vigorous and industrious men, just freed from alien rule and passionately attached to their own people and their native land. They are the outpost of Europe to the East as Scandinavia is to the North, and Europe has, since their liberation, organized herself expressly with the view of safeguarding their freedom and giving them a place as nations in the economy of the world. Time here should be quickened in its course by the deliberate action of men. We have sighted the ideal; let us take all practicable means, without delay, to attain it.

XII

ENGLAND'S PART

In the last chapter a short and simple account of modern nationhood was attempted, and it was seen how England had been the first country in the world to attain that condition. If, following her development in history, we come to the present time, an interesting and still unique position is revealed. Owing to a concurrence of many causes, largely geographical, no other nation has secured attachments with so many diverse parts of the inhabited globe. On no nation does so much depend in the international sphere. She has both friends and competitors in this respect, France and the United States approaching nearest. But the former, though more active in Europe and, possibly, more skilful in diplomacy, has not the array of daughter-states at her side nor comparable dependencies, forming, as they do with England, a set of links, West, East and South. The latter is now much richer and has a larger population of European origin within her boundaries. But the nation there is not yet immersed fully in world-affairs, nor has it so many *points d'appui* across the seas. It is in history that we must seek the causes which have given England this rôle, and one may at once dismiss two fanciful theories which are sometimes adduced to explain such facts. There was no special strain of Aryan, or any other blood, which led to the result. Nor was there ever a deep-laid plan of able and far-seeing men to cover and link up the world. What we now see is the convergence of

many strains, of blood, of ideas, of circumstance. While able men have not been wanting, England in this respect is not unique. She gained most, from the beginning, by her central and insular position, near enough to the continent to be influenced by it, far enough from it to protect her inhabitants; rich and sufficiently accessible to attract the invader, cut off enough to persuade him to settle down and make his home with others who had arrived before. And, being a small island, the inhabitants were led to make tolerable friendship together. Such was the geographical factor; the history may be briefly set out in its three or four main stages.

It is better for this purpose not to go back further in British history, or pre-history, than the Romans. We know that the Romans did great work here, though of a less extensive or permanent kind than in Gaul or Spain. Our comparative isolation from the centre of European life begins with the departure of the Roman troops early in the fifth century. The next six centuries, till the Normans came, are a dark and confused period, illuminated chiefly by two bright spots—the mission of Augustine, followed by the work of Theodore of Tarsus, by which England was definitely linked up with the Catholic church; and the work and example of Alfred, by which the foundations of an English literature and an English nation were firmly laid. The reconciliation of the Danish invaders by Alfred was a capital event in building the national unity.

The Normans, who were strong rulers everywhere, had their best chance in England owing to its comparative orderliness and unity before they came, and to its insular position. By the time that the struggle with France arrived, in the fourteenth

century, England was unquestionably a nation, and had achieved her fundamental self-governing rights in the Great Charter and an established Parliament. She had not yet begun to show the part which she was destined to play in international affairs. This may be dated from the sixteenth century. With the Tudors, and especially with Elizabeth, there appears for the first time the famous and much abused idea of a Balance of Power, which led the sovereigns and statesmen of a now united and growing state to promote that growth, both at home and abroad, while others exhausted themselves in ambitious wars. England should intervene only to prevent anyone becoming too strong. It was a simple idea, but capable of development. When generalized sufficiently, it should give peace all round, on the principle of a parallelogram of forces.

Elizabeth stands forever beside Shakespeare as the two most distinguished figures in the evolution of England's part in world affairs. Shakespeare, of course, is much more, but he is specially notable in this chapter as showing how, in the most fully developed human consciousness, strong national or patriotic feelings consort perfectly with complete humanity of outlook. One cannot attain the latter without the former, as all the greatest men from Shakespeare to Wordsworth, Goethe, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Einstein, have made unmistakable. Elizabeth in her own sphere of statecraft is also immortal, for without animosity towards other nations, she became the pioneer in the policy by which England gained, first, the command of the sea and then, the casting vote, first in Europe and then in the world.

From Elizabeth's days it became the settled aim of all thinking and patriotic men, to abstain as far as safety allowed, from continental interference, but

never to permit any ambitious Power or personality either to dominate the rest or threaten the access to our own shores and ports. Elizabeth in resisting Spain destroyed the danger of a reactionary Catholicism, and, so acting, she represented the nation at the most united and enthusiastic moment in its history. At the next similar crisis the issue was less clearly seen and party strife at home left the decision to be taken by one of the greatest statesmen of Holland. But there can be no doubt that William III in resisting Louis XIV had the support of the vast mass of Englishmen, and that it was as protagonist against Louis that Englishmen forgave him his bad manners and his foreign favourites.

With Marlborough completing the work of William, the eighteenth century opened, on England established in her position as arbitrator in grave European dissensions, strong enough to repress any threatened domination of one Power or interest, free by her own power at sea to set up the largest colonial empire that the world had seen. At the end of it she had definitely beaten her most serious competitor, had won India and Canada from the French and lost her own most valuable colonies in New England. The last blow—her only serious defeat since the Hundred Years War—was a blessing in disguise. It initiated a new policy in dealing with colonial dependencies which led to the British Commonwealth of the twentieth century, and was accompanied by a strong awakening of the moral sense of the nation in regard to its position and duties towards all the populations beneath its sway. The same men, such as Burke, who had deplored the policy which led to the loss of the United States, were those who pressed hardest for a dis-

interested attitude in Indian affairs. A new spirit dates from that time, and it may quite rightly be connected with the new humanitarianism which found a violent outlet in the French Revolution. The main difference between the two countries was, that, while in France it seemed necessary to make a wide clearance of old customs, institutions and rights, in England, thanks to the continuity of her national life and the constant re-interpretation of her old laws, it was possible to pour the new wine into the old bottles. As this had been done at home, the same sort of measures were naturally devised to spread freedom and self-government in the outlying parts. Change as little as may be, and in your change be sure that you have some definite, practicable end in view. This, in the briefest form, was the underlying principle at work.

The end of the nineteenth century saw another challenge to the independence of states and the free development of England which has a curious resemblance to those at the end of the two previous centuries. Again, as with Louis XIV and Napoleon, a single, strong, military power began to command obedience outside its own borders, and threatened the free development and trade of Great Britain. With many other complications this was how the actions of Germany appeared to the average Englishman, and the Kaiser became a re-incarnation of the Boney of a hundred years before. The cases were, however, internationally different, both in the course of the War and its results. The world was now so much more closely knit that a majority of the nations found themselves drawn in, and, at the end, a still larger majority joined a new organization, aimed at preventing such disasters in future and at

bringing the common affairs of all nations to one meeting-place and a fair decision.

The League of Nations was the first experiment in international organization on a world-scale in which Great Britain and British ideas had a leading part. Each of the previous war-crises, which, by a curious coincidence, always happened at the turn of the centuries, had suggested some form of international assembly to order things better in future. But none of them before the League was British and American in origin. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Henri IV is said to have devised a 'Grand Design' and to have consulted Queen Elizabeth about it. But, however this may be, Elizabeth certainly did not devise it. At the beginning of the eighteenth, after the struggle with Louis XIV, the Abbé de St. Pierre published at Utrecht his *Projet de Paix Perpetuelle*, not inspired either by the French or the English governments. And after the Napoleonic wars, the famous Holy Alliance arose from the fertile brain of the Czar Alexander under French idealist influence. So far from being backed by England, this scheme was frowned on by the solid men then in charge of our affairs. In 1919 the scene had changed: General Smuts, who had, with English and American colleagues, done much to frame the League, declared that we had in the Empire already a lesser League of Nations in being. That gave hope for the success of the larger. Both organizations were alike, in being based on the free co-operation of self-governing communities, united in the determination to resolve conflicts and promote the common weal by consultation and concerted action.

The large interest of England in the League is shown, not only by her efforts at its initiation, but

by the fact that the British Empire has six seats in the Assembly and Great Britain one permanent seat on the Council. She had advanced, in the interval since the French Revolution, to a fuller realization of her own powers. Finding that, by the concession of freedom, both in domestic politics and imperial relations, she became both stronger, more peaceful and more united, she was fain to hope that the same would be true of the larger League. In that spirit she has from the first been inclined to differ from France, the other stalwart supporter of the League among the greater Powers. The French would from the first have armed the League with more coercive and some military strength. Great Britain demurs, for causes drawn from her own experience. The more orderly and reasonable any community is, the less necessary for it either to use, or to parade, the instruments of force which must in the last resort be brought into action to coerce the wrong-doers or those who would disturb the peace. We are well aware of this among ourselves, and therefore naturally inclined to extend the same principle to others. It implies no special genius in those who practise it, being merely the establishment of common sense: it would seem therefore an insult to deny its possibility to others, given the time for establishment. The international aspect is, of course, both newer and much more difficult than the national. This cannot be discussed here in detail, but the English habit would suggest; first, the application of all possible means of reasonable and moral suasion; second, the securing of as large a body as possible of united international opinion, ready to use force if necessary; third, the provision of the best machinery for mobilizing this opinion and bringing force to bear, when reason has failed.

England's part, however, in world affairs is far larger and more subtly diffused than her action in the League of Nations. From the eighteenth century onwards England has been looked to, especially by political thinkers of all countries, as the model of steady constitutional development. She seemed to have solved better than other nations the problem of securing popular freedom and representative government with a minimum of revolution or even of change. There had been a rebellion and a civil war, and a king's head had fallen, to the horror of all Europe. But when the old constitution was revived at the Restoration, and amended without disturbance under William and Mary, the genius or good fortune of the nation began to strike the imagination of the world. Her successes under Marlborough and her triumph at sea deepened the impression. In spite of narrow-minded and unpopular kings imported from Hanover, England was in that century a cynosure for thoughtful eyes abroad, much as France had been a hundred years before. Montesquieu held up her constitution for general imitation. Voltaire acclaimed Newton. Her 'deists' became the pioneers of freer religious thought and her Shakespeare the chief divinity, first of the German stage and then of the Romantics everywhere.

It was, however, politically that she carried most weight. In politics she displayed in the highest practical sphere that art of adaptation, of fitting the new to the old, which, became recognized as her master trait. In William's revolution the chief actor received indeed less credit than the nation, which had at first co-operated with him in a much divided state of mind. As time went on, and British power under Chatham asserted itself in all parts of the globe, another claim to distinction was

accorded to the men who did these things and those who directed them. They were liberally supported at home and a policy once taken up was carried through. This feature of the national character became still more marked after the conflict with Napoleon. Of all the nations which took up arms against him, England was the most persistent and most decisive in the final result. Except for the brief and troubled interval after the Peace of Amiens, she was at war for all the period of over twenty years, not only fighting herself but enabling others to fight by her financial resources. Napoleon was himself the first to recognise this. It was essentially the victory of industry and steady constitutional progress over revolutionary and autocratic violence. The lessons are printed at large in the history of the nineteenth century. France herself, both under her bourgeois king and under the third Napoleon, made co-operation with England as steady an object of her policy as opposition was under the first Empire. England's constitution was imitated, both by France and by all the other states which during the century gained independence and self-government.

It is sometimes hastily assumed that this tendency to self-government on English, i.e., constitutional and steadily progressive, lines, has recently received a fatal check, that the world is entering a new period of autocratic or dictatorial rule, in which individual freedom will be sacrificed to the interests of conflicting national groups, directed by psychological despots. Something will be said on this topic in a later chapter, but, dealing, as we are here with the influence of the British example, it cannot be said that this has yet begun to wane.

In spite of the dictatorships, which bulk large in

the public eye, it will be found, on careful and exhaustive examination, that more and more states make a practice of consulting the public opinion of their citizens, that representative assemblies are more frequent and that the dictators, who are thrown up in times of crises, find it necessary to fortify themselves by popular appeals. To discuss this question at all adequately is not relevant in this place. But it is relevant to note how often, both on constitutional and administrative points, English practice is studied and imitated. The prestige which Germany acquired after her triumph in 1871, has for the time completely disappeared, and of the countries now exercising most influence in the world England would probably take first place. And when in other cases, in Italy for example, any general admiration is aroused, it is given, not to the dictatorship in itself but to the vigour which has been imparted into the national life, to the interest taken in its historic past, and to the hopes kindled for the future. A somewhat similar vigour arouses our admiration in the United States, where there is no question of a dictatorship in any strict sense of the term. In that country, owing to an unparalleled economic depression, the mass of the people were moved to entrust large powers temporarily to their chief executive officer, and, in carrying them out, he has quickly put into force laws which had been in many cases quietly and gradually introduced and successfully worked in this country. In the three capital cases—the banks, labour legislation and the relief of unemployment—the English example was obvious. It was necessary for the United States to assume as a whole more of the duties of a modern industrial state than she had been performing hitherto, and so far to subordinate the individual states which compose the Union. The compactness and homo-

geneity of England had here, as in many historical moments, given her an advantage.

France, too, it may be noted, is at the moment endeavouring to approximate constitutionally to the English model. Alike, at many points in her history, to the evolution of England, she has not had the same long practice in representative government. The making of ministries out of her Chamber was a sudden new experience sprung upon her in the nineteenth century, while England had been enjoying Whigs and Tories for two hundred years. The result was the immediate creation of a class of professional politicians—mostly lawyers—who were at that time hardly known at all in this country. The scramble for office, the multiplication of parties, the bargaining in coalitions, the changes of ministry, have gone one increasing ever since, until at present a strong movement is on foot to reform both the administration and the constitutional practice, avowedly on English lines.

England, however, is by no means predominant on all the fields of intellectual activity, though most foreigners would grant her an eminence in poetry and imaginative literature. On any question of profound and detailed research, if a list of authorities is appended, one notes a minority of English names, a large majority of Germans. The French, slightly inferior in volume even to the English, are superior to both, in clearness of arrangement and in allowing the main idea to illuminate the details. Again in art, the English contribution and initiative, though highly characteristic, do not lead the world. Our Wilson and Turner are shining lights in the firmament of landscape; but France, since the Italians and the Netherland painters, has been dominant. It is rather in matters which involve keeping things together and making them work,

that English training and habit are most effective. And of all things that have to be kept together, human beings are the most important and the most difficult.

The faculty of getting things together and making them work is the essence of 'mechanism,' and it is well known that this power has been eminent in most great English men of science, as well as engineers. Newton was famous for it before he became immortal for other things. Robert Hooke, Clerk Maxwell, Kelvin had the same aptitude, and a host of others. It is connected no doubt with the handiness of the old-fashioned seaman, the handiest of men. The reputation of being the 'practical' man is, on the whole, well earned. Such a one is less interested as a rule in abstract theory, and well content if he can gain his end—his enemies will say his selfish end—by some readjustment of existing means and material, without considering beforehand whether the whole arrangement is ideal. An Englishman may thankfully accept this reputation and make the best of it. Its most important application is in the sphere of human relations, within the State and elsewhere. Here it is law—man-made law—which governs the relations, so far as the State is concerned, and it is a notable fact that England alone, and the communities which derive from England, have succeeded in developing from their common law and adequate and elastic system without recourse to a Code. She alone, with a constitution most admired in its working, has no written constitution.

Several thoughts are suggested by these facts, all bearing on England's present place and possible influence among the nations. One is that, being, in respect of her unwritten constitution and her common law, unique, she cannot possibly expect all other nations to conform. There must, and should

be, wide diversity between the governments and legal systems of the world. Any plans which may be devised for the common executive action of the nations must take account of this, and what is called loosely a 'world-state' is in the strict sense of the words, impossible. Of this more is to be said in a later chapter. The influence of England will be felt most widely and most beneficially in indirect ways. Being relieved of the acute internal differences which disturb so many states, having at home a stable constitution and a law-abiding temper, she is in a position to turn more attention to conditions elsewhere, to inform herself and to give, when occasion offers, impartial, better-informed and disinterested counsel. Such things have happened before now; they might happen more frequently if confidence were felt on the one side, and genuine sympathy and disinterestedness on the other. Influence and advice coming from such a source would aim at delaying violent courses, at holding people peaceably together on the *status quo* until a wise forward movement was possible, at preferring always an action with consent, an action, as far as possible, in accord with history.

There are three other ways in which the influence and example of England are notable. The first is in language. While strenuous efforts are being made with some success to invent and teach the nations some universal form of speech, English continues to make its way, by virtue of its intrinsic ease and comprehensiveness, and by the fact that those who speak it are to be found in so many key-positions in the world. Trade, colonization, travel and missionary work have led the speakers of English into more corners of the earth's surface than those of any other language. Indeed, if one

includes the Americans, probably into more places than all the rest put together. Not only the whole British Commonwealth and the United States are permanently gained for English, but it seems likely to prevail as the second general language in China and Japan and in a large part of Africa and South America. There is no space here to discuss the probable effects of this, either on the speakers or on the language spoken. But it should cause some serious heart-searching among the writers and speakers of present-day English, more serious still when one observes the sort of English books which are most sold abroad, and the sort of English which is spoken not only in an Indian or Egyptian school, but among ourselves. 'May the good prevail!' must be one's leading thought; and a sense of responsibility in those who have the birthright to preserve and to develop at home.

A second line of influence is somewhat akin to this and is found in many places where English is not generally spoken. English education is widely imitated, rather in the junior branches of education than at the academic stage.

While the initial impulse towards the natural and human way of teaching little children did not come from England, it is undoubtedly true that it gained its widest extension from this country. Froebel was German, Pestalozzi Swiss and Montessori Italian, but nowhere else have little children from the earliest age been treated so consistently on kindergarten principles as in English infant schools. The method has an obvious kinship with the plan of self-government, games and learning by doing, with which English education is associated. In its most characteristic sphere of the 'public-school,' it is games and self-government which have most attracted

the imitation of foreigners. When visiting us they habitually notice the much more limited intellectual range of English scholars. But, "What vigour!" they say. "What happiness! What *esprit de corps!*"

While reformers at home—no doubt wisely—lament the over-athleticism of the young and try to correct it, it is precisely by that games-spirit that England has infected the largest number of people in the world. Even where they have discarded our constitutional example and enjoy a dictator, they still play football and tennis and often beat us at our own game. But the domestic consumption of this article is far more useful than its export. In the great coal strike of 1924, there were many thousands of men idle. A few were trying to work and a few violent enough to be ready to injure a mine or a miner who had broken away from his fellows. There might easily have been disturbances. Some might easily have found their way to prison or lost their lives. But another method was employed. Sports were arranged to occupy and amuse the possible combatants and at more than one of the chief mining centres in West Yorkshire a well-ordered cricket match might have been seen in progress, with the police on one side and the strikers on the other.

XIII

THE EXPANSION OF THE WEST

MANY books have been written on the subject of this chapter, some under the same title. But it is impossible to omit it, as it describes—how accurately we shall see in a moment—one of the most important turning points in human history. It follows naturally on a discussion of England's development, because, as was pointed out at the beginning of the last chapter, England is that part of the West which has expanded most. The rest of that chapter was devoted to features belonging to England's internal life. It is time to return to the wider outlook.

One must begin with some definition of terms. What is the West? In what sense has it expanded? Without inquiring minutely into the first occasion on which the word was used in its present sense, one may be sure that it was not before the time of the Greeks, possibly not before Christian times. They were "wise men from the East" who came bringing gifts to the infant Jesus, and the Greeks, too, in their earlier days had looked to the East as a storehouse of wisdom, and in the days of Alexander as a storehouse of wealth. The Greeks, however, began to conceive the idea of a superior civilization of which they were the protagonists. To them the primary test of a higher type of man was that he was willing to discuss all subjects freely with his fellows and live rationally according to the result. The same men also made beauty of life and thought an object of desire, but reason was the chief criterion. This need not have led to the division of East and

West, as we know it, had not the Romans supervened. Akin to the Greeks, and absorbing many of their ideas, they were able to impose the amalgam on a unified state which leant more to the West than to the East. But, even so, West and East were not yet born, for the Romans, though more Western than the Greeks, were not intellectually their superiors, and the West as a whole then contained a far more barbarous population than countries to the East. Still the work of Rome, in consolidating the peoples of Europe round herself, was the definite turning point, and, as this consolidation was continued and extended by the Catholic Church, 'West' and 'East' finally entered into the parlance of mankind, 'West' came to mean Christendom, especially the Christendom of those countries which had adhered to, or derived from, the allegiance of Rome.

What is called the 'Expansion of the West', however, did not begin till an even later date. It is associated with the voyages and settlements of European Christians from the fifteenth century onwards, into which four distinct elements enter, all of them essential in the genesis of the movement. One was the mental and physical vigour in the combination of which the Western European was unquestionably, at that time, superior. Whereas Arabian or Chinese seamen had for ages explored the waters nearer to themselves, the European conceived the idea, and having conceived it never rested till it was realized, of circumnavigating and exploring the whole globe. Second and third in their minds—in different order in different cases—came the desire of trade or profit, and the desire of converting the men discovered to the Christian faith. The latter impulse was a legacy from the

mediæval crusades which had just been concluded when Portuguese and Spaniards began the modern expansion. Trading and settling in new countries were of course motives as old as mankind. What made them in those centuries so universally triumphant was their being linked, in the first place with a proselytizing religion, and, in the second, with a new well-based and expanding science. This is the fourth and the permanently decisive element.

Vigour—physical and intellectual. Trade, or material profit of some kind. Religion. Science. Here are the elements contributing to the Expansion of the West.

When we trace the progress of the movement onward in time, we notice that the parts played by the various elements vary in their proportions. There was a touch of modern science even in the voyages of the earliest fifteenth century explorers, for they had the compass. But in those earliest stages science was in the background of the expansion. At the other end of the movement—in our own day—the scientific element is predominant. Electricity, aviation, wireless, railways and medicine have given the West, which has developed these things on a basis of science, an unquestioned primacy. The spreading of one form of religion is now no longer officially, or overtly, connected, either with the discovery or the settlement of countries or with the relations of Western men with others. Missionaries go, possibly in larger numbers than ever. But they go as agents of private organizations of believers, and they work specially to make their congregations in foreign parts self-supporting and autonomous.

If one said that trade was the one constant factor in the process, it would be with a sad consciousness that in these latter days the one constant had been a diminishing quantity. The paradox, however, is

only on the surface. Trade of some sort must always go on, between nations as within them; for no nation can produce everything that all its members either require or desire. It has diminished lately, partly owing to the heavy indebtedness bequeathed by the war, partly because the newly emancipated nations have been struggling so vigorously to produce more within their own boundaries and supply themselves. It remains true, however, that, from first to last, the exchange of commodities has been the most fruitful source of intercourse between the various sections of mankind, and that it was immensely increased when the methods and the productions of science were added to the physical vigour and intellectual resource of the men of Western Europe.

The net result of this process, now going on for nearly five hundred years, has been the greatest transformation in the life, and especially the intercommunications, of men, which history presents. It has started problems in the midst of which we now live and of which no man can foresee the solution, except by faith. We can only touch on a few of them very tentatively in this chapter.

Here, as always, the road of history is the only safe approach, either to the present or the future. But the line is much more complex and zigzag than when we were tracing the rise of one national state. We cannot say exactly when or how far the superior vigour of northern navigators and traders outstript the Spaniard and the Portuguese who led the way. We cannot exactly estimate the contribution of the religion they professed to bring, to the change of culture which ensued. We cannot be sure of the balance of intellectual forces which brought about the change of policy at the

end of the eighteenth century. The appearance of a new policy and spirit at that time is certain, but its genesis is confused. Above all, the actual working of the scientific spirit in the whole interconnected world of to-day is so manifold and subtle, that this becomes the most problematic of all the stages. To that therefore we shall devote the major portion of our small space.

The story of the early navigators is so exciting in all its aspects that it has been perhaps more often told than any other tale in history. All Western nations have their heroes in it, those with ample seaboard naturally the larger share. There does not seem much, either of religion or of science, in the conduct of the wild brave seamen of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Superstition no doubt in plenty, and on the Spanish ships when they took formal possession of the New World, priests and friars to receive the natives into the one true Church. But we must remember that even thus early there were two applications of science in the hands of the invaders which made their voyage possible and their conquests easy. These were the compass and gunpowder. And it is also memorable that, from the first, the two-edged nature of the gifts of science was clearly shown. The Western man, like Columbus or Cook, was worshipped as a god by the natives primarily because he possessed so deadly a weapon as a gun. It was a fresh instance of fear as the source of religious awe which has played so large, but not an exclusive, part in the genesis of primitive religion. Reverence and love came afterwards in many cases, but it was long before the other and healing side of science came into the ordinary relations of Western and other men.

The main turning point in these relations came towards the end of the eighteenth century. Up to that time the scramble for trade and territories had gone on with little check, either in the interests of the native peoples invaded or of the competing Western nations who joined in the quest. England had definitely distanced the Portuguese and Spaniards during the seventeenth century and might have taken still more advantage from the Dutch, had her policy towards them not changed with the advent of William III. The crusading impulse was long extinct. There remained the chief tussle with the French, which became a leading political motive in the eighteenth century. Not till that was fought out finally in the Napoleonic wars were the two countries able to settle down to their habitual friendly rivalry and co-operation which has lasted ever since. In the end the leading rôle, both on the North American continent and in the Far East, fell to Great Britain, and the Empire of India was actually won for the latter by fighting France in the Carnatic, Bengal and Mysore.

Nothing could demonstrate more clearly the change of spirit which took place at the end of the eighteenth century than to compare Clive's campaigns with the Brussels conference of 1888, a little more than a hundred years later. In the former, intrigue, adventure, vast profits for the winner, with a Frenchman behind one Indian Prince and an Englishman behind another. In the latter, a general consent of the colonizing European Powers that their action should be co-operative and aimed primarily at the extinction of slavery and the welfare of the native peoples.

This pious wish, anticipating the Covenant of the League of Nations, referred to Africa, and it came

exactly a hundred years after Burke's famous defence of the Indians against Warren Hastings. Much had happened in the interval, not less than one of the greatest transformations in history. In the sphere of expansion Africa had taken the place which America and the Far East had held in European eyes in the previous century. England and France were still competitors, but not in the desperate spirit of a hundred years before, and the 'scramble for Africa' had become a general international game which Lord Salisbury hoped to keep within the rules at the Brussels conference. But in other spheres the changes were still more momentous. The violence of the French Revolution had come and gone. Its aftermath was a spread of more or less democratic systems all over the West, and the democracies, if not more peaceful, were at least more open to feelings about the rights of men,—even those men who had succumbed to the superior force of Western invaders. Deeper and wider in their effects had come two other changes in that fateful century. A humane religion and an organizing science had begun to exercise their proper sway, and the resolutions of the Brussels Conference are above all, an expression of this. As capital issues were then arising which are active in the world to-day, these two changes deserve a rather fuller notice.

There was always implicit in primitive Christianity a doctrine of the spiritual equality of mankind. That this was so is apparent from the social quality of the early converts. It was essentially a gospel for the poor and outcast. But centuries of royal and official patronage had obscured the ancient truth, and when the great expansion came in the sixteenth century, though the gospel was on the lips of many of the explorers, greed was in the heart of many

more. Hence the religious revival, in this sense, of the eighteenth century, came as a new and even a monstrous and impracticable thing. In England the Quakers were its earliest and most persistent exponents, and the trade in slaves and the holding of slaves became for many years the chief field on which the battle was fought. The Methodists on the whole were on the same side, and, as the movement was in spirit comprehensive and philosophic, it carried with it many men of other parties and other faiths. Burke was its philosophic orator, Wilberforce and the Clapham school religious and political adherents of conservative attachments. The victory over slavery was obviously only the first step towards a long constructive policy, and to the pioneers who won it, all who aim at humanizing the world must look back with gratitude.

The other and still greater change in the expansive methods of the West within that century is due to the applications of science. Here also, as we saw, the germ was carried by the earliest conquistadores. Not only had they the compass, the gun and the printing-press, but they had a mind awakened from the dogmatic slumbers of nearly a millennium. This gave them personal prestige with the peoples they visited and enabled them often to win against terrific odds a temporary superiority of force. But this was far indeed from what the scientific development of the nineteenth century made possible; and to this last period belong all the profound and lasting changes which the West is in process of carrying out all over the world. What was once an expansion, or eruption, of men, has now become an expansion of mind.

Now in judging the results or the prospects of any movement one must put the main things

first, and avoid undue distraction by the passing incidents of comedy or tragedy which fill so large a space even in serious writings on the subject. Race-snobbishness, the importation of Western vices, the bigotry of missionaries, the decay of native arts, are all evils, but to sum them up does not give us the social equations we are seeking. Where may we look for the weightier and more permanent factors ?

First of all, it would seem, in the organizing effect which is the practical result of the scientific spirit. Just as the growth of science in Europe in the sixteenth and following centuries led to the organization and greater stability of national states, so in the wider area where Western men have settled, the same sort of spirit and activity have worked to similar ends. Any country under a modern Western régime gives proof enough, and one takes examples from the dependencies of France and England because those two remained at the end the largest colonial Powers. In India or the Soudan, in Tunis or Algeria, the Western controlling Power has established peace and preserves order as it was never known in earlier days. The efficient administration in all such cases, with its contacts and benefits to the health, justice, and education of the inhabitants, rests in the last analysis on an orderly and active mind, a mind which has come from the same social environment which invented and works the telescope, pierced mountains for railways and laid electric cables on the ocean bed. There were no doubt organizing minds before science, as brave men before Agamemnon. Persia and the Roman Empire are famous examples. But nothing is more striking in history than the contrast in stability between the old pre-scientific societies, such as the empires of Assyria, Persia, even of Rome, and that

of modern societies with a scientific mind at their centre. The empire of Darius is often applauded as a wonder of organization, and it anticipated in some points—such as roads and posts—the arrangements of later times. It went down like a pack of cards before the first serious assault. The Roman Empire, the most extensive and successful of ancient efforts, could only struggle on, with constant wars, revolts and disasters, for a doubtful four hundred years. There was not a force of collective organizing mind equal to the task imposed. In modern times the Great War inflicted on the states of Europe, especially on Germany, Poland, Russia and parts of Italy and France, distress and destruction on an unprecedented scale. Science itself for a time turned murderer. Yet the social structure (except in Russia) remained unshaken, and, within a few years, in outward seeming, the battlefields were restored and in many points of social welfare substantial advances are now secured. Science in fact, in spite of its latent dangers and its temporary aberration, is the grand stabilizer and organizer of society, and this effect is most clearly shown in parts of the world, like India and Africa, where the Western scientifically trained mind has been at work for some time on a large scale. There seems every reason to expect that this process will go on indefinitely, not necessarily, of course, at the hands of the Europeans who happen to have been the first to enter into the new inheritance of man. Individually, men of any race or colour may be equally competent for the work, and we have in the case of the Japanese a whole nation which has applied the lesson with lightning rapidity and a success, marred by similar blots, equal to our own.

The League of Nations is the world-emblem of this organization, itself the child of the convulsive

struggle which in earlier days would have put back civilization in Europe for centuries. The League is only possible by the combination of states, well-organized within themselves and brought together by the methods of modern science. Its social and political ideas have advanced beyond even those of the pious wish of the Brussels Conference, for in its Assembly states-members sit with equal rights whose nationalist aspirations were a few years back chafing under 'aggressive imperialisms.'

The League is the chief emblem of this co-operating world and contains already over fifty of the possible sixty-six states-members. But the spirit and the organization which have set it up, make a far wider appeal than to the benches at Geneva, which are sometimes temporarily empty. Obviously those countries which, for a time or for some reason, do not take their seats there, are yet in constant and intimate touch with those who do. The organized community which the activity and thought of man has built up after millennia of self-conscious life, is larger than the League to which it has given birth, and is working in a thousand ways which the League cannot touch and would survive if the League died. This is the first and most important aspect of the Expansion of the West.

One can easily imagine this organization of the world going on until the whole is safely locked in one stable and interconnected system. This is the logical issue of men thinking and working together, and, in spite of temporary jars and outbursts, there are abundant signs that the process is going on. The increasing terrors of a world-wide war are a strong impelling force towards maintaining such an equilibrium, and the League of Nations is constantly at work, promoting the influences which tend to

preserve it. It must be remembered however that such world-organization, valuable as it is for its own pacific purpose, is but one aspect of the expansion of mind, and that organization, if carried to excess and not accompanied by free activities of many kinds, may be actually an oppression. Many human activities run grave risks by over-organization —risks of timidity, uniformity, ossification. Nations, churches, industries, schools and universities offer instructive instances and the 'world-state' of which so many prophets speak, would be the most fatal example, if it suffered from the same disease. The chief remedy is to be the subject of the next chapter; here it must be pointed out that, though organization is the most obvious result of the Expansion of the West, there are many others. Some are apparently injurious; the balance, as must appear to a fair-judging and well-informed mind, is clearly on the side of advantage. Science increasingly powerful, religion increasingly rational and humane, trade temporarily hindered but increasingly pressed;—these are the main contributions which the West is urging on the world at the present time.

But what of the men themselves?, the critic will inquire. "Humanity may be upon the march," as a great statesman has informed us, but is it confident of its goal, and, above all, is it happy on the way? And, in these days of wide unrest and general dissatisfaction, no simple affirmative answer will suffice. Let it be observed, on starting an answer, that the very fact on which this chapter is based implies unrest. We are speaking of an expansion, in the first place, of men overrunning the globe, in the second place, of ideas. It would be inconceivable that such a world-movement was not accompanied by disturbance. The disturbances which we have

actually witnessed, are far less violent than accompanied the ancient migrations of peoples—the Germans from the North in the Roman Empire, the Mongols from the East in the Middle Ages. Moreover the recent Expansion of the West has brought with it, as we have just seen, a new and more settled order, in the framework of which the naturally ameliorative effects of science have everywhere begun to show themselves. Nothing vitiates so much the current judgments of historic events as the failure to allow for the influence of science in producing them, and of science as the chief agent in bettering the condition of the populations which have applied it.

Everywhere in these newly organized areas the rate of mortality has gone down and the population begins to increase, often, as in India, at a rate which tasks the resources of the country. Everywhere (except in special cases due to alcohol or temporary upset or strange disease) health conditions improve. Africa has of recent years been the chief testing ground for this experiment, and it is also the scene of the most terrible tragedies which accompanied the Expansion. Yet it was the mature opinion of Sir Harry Johnston, who had fought for the native cause all his life, that the condition of the continent since the advent of the European was far better than in pre-European days. It is a striking thing that in most cases in which a Western Power is criticized for its shortcomings in regard to some conquered or 'protected' race, it is because of failure to apply fully the scientific methods which are in use at home. In native territories in Africa, for instance, there is great need for more and better medical care, and a just complaint may be lodged against the authorities who have so far

hindered the proper training of native doctors. No one claims that they should be left to the magical prescriptions of the witch doctors of old. So in India. One of the soundest criticisms of the British Raj is that the mass of the people remain illiterate and unenlightened, but no one wishes to see revived the ancient conning of the sacred books under a sacred tree. Still more striking is the fact that those countries and leaders who have set themselves most strongly against the influence—what they regard as the dominance—of the West, have in every case, either voluntarily or by compulsion, adopted Western methods to carry out their crusade. The West must be beaten with Western weapons. Thus Russia, which under Lenin proclaimed a Holy War on capitalism, learnt its gospel from Karl Marx, the most international of Jews who studied philosophy and social conditions in Germany and France and did most of his writing in the British Museum. Going still further under the successors of Lenin, the supreme ambition of Russia to-day is to industrialize the whole country, fields and towns, with the latest Western machinery, installed by Western engineers. In India one has seen a pathetic effort on the part of their saintly leader to reverse the process and induce the peasant to weave and wear his own cloth and live in simple village life. This is the part of Gandhi's programme which has failed most completely. He has succeeded, in so far as he has inspired young Indians to adopt the Western political methods of congress and votes and platforms and biassed press. His most powerful supporters are the mill-owners who hope to use Western methods to better profit in an independent state.*

* See on this, A. J. Toynbee's *Study of History*, Vol. IV, 200, etc.

Thus one may see on all hands the determination which was expressed by the leaders of the Young China movement in Canton, to learn all that the West had to teach, to go through with it, as Japan was doing, and to come out somewhere on the other side. That is indeed the situation and the hope of all of us, but whereas to China and India the goal of Westernization appears as something to be achieved, we, having industrialized almost to the limit, are now casting our eyes with some longing to a simpler and quieter life, where the machine is not so dominant. For this is in truth the dominance which is now in question, not the dominance of one race or country over the rest. No one supposes that England in these days really aims at the dominance of India or of extending her rule anywhere. She, and nearly all the other Powers of the West, are well content if they can secure a peaceful world where the trader can operate and the beneficent work of science and teaching can proceed. If a movement is now detected on the part of any Power to disturb the territorial balance or gain exclusive trading privileges, it becomes a case for League discussion and, though methods of prevention seem at present somewhat slow and cumbrous, no doubt they will shortly prevail. The West has expanded. The next chapter of the world's history will disclose the use made of the resources thus poured out over the surface of the globe.

XIV

FREEDOM IN UNITY

IT might well seem that the last chapter had brought these studies as far as history warrants, and that the next step belonged to the prophet. But two of the general aspects of society to-day still remain for notice, which strike forcibly all students of history and seem to many full of danger for the future. A brief review of these should precede the hopeful note on which any fair-minded student of history must conclude.

It was pointed out in Chapter XII how at one time, especially about a hundred years ago, the world generally seemed moving on to what may be described as English lines of government. Great Britain had proved in the struggle with Napoleon so tenacious, and ultimately so decisive, that her example, which had already been studied and admired in the eighteenth century, became still more infectious. Freedom and the Rights of Man were the watchwords of all advanced thinkers and politicians, and to make these safe and permanent there seemed no better framework than the English constitution, properly liberalized by Reform. This then was the gospel of the States—Belgium and Greece for instance—which reorganized themselves about this time. It was also the gospel of the much larger number of 'liberal' reformers who aimed at changing the governments of autocratic States, such as Germany and Austria and Italy, and were shot down for their pains. It may be said that this process went on, with varying fortune

and some decided setbacks, till the end of the century, or even till the Great War. Now for some time the scene, at least in parts of the world, has changed. Representative government has disappeared and dictators are in power whose *ipse dixits* are laws and whose first object in ruling often seems to be the suppression of any chance of opposition to themselves. True pessimists, those who actually believe that the world is going from bad to worse, think that this is a spreading disease, and that we are all destined, sooner rather than later, to fall into the same state. One cannot, therefore, conclude even the shortest sketch of the relations of the present to the past without some allusion to a state of things so unexpected, so contrary to the hopes of many years.

One or two general facts about all these cases strike the observer at once and must make him pause. He will notice that in every instance in which a dictator is now in power, the régime dates from the end of the Great War and arose from war-conditions. He will notice too that in every case the country thus ruled had had before the War no long experience of self-government as an independent nation. In several cases, e.g., Poland, Yugoslavia and the various limbs of Turkey, the regions now separated into national states were before the War attached to centres of alien rule and have had only the short post-War period to grow together. In others—Germany and Russia for instance—the previous rule was autocratic, though of a different type. In Italy, though a representative and popular system had been in force, it never worked well, the different regions were loosely knit and the Church, perhaps the strongest power in the whole, was unreconciled. One must add to all

this, what, in the opinion of many critics, is the main, and will prove to be the permanent cause of dictatorial rule, viz., that the conditions of the modern world, so immeasurably complicated by the discoveries of science and the new opportunities of enjoyment, now transcend the power of judgment and control by the individual man. He must submit to guidance, in his own interest, still more in the interest of everyone else. In short, the ruler of a scientific world must be, if not a philosopher as with Plato, certainly an expert.

These various arguments, and the confused scene before us, must be sorted out if we are to have any clear thinking about the matter.

In the first place, it is to be observed that the dictatorial State, about which so much debate and alarm go on, is by no means so widespread as a first glance might suggest. The bulk of the nations remain, at least in form, democratically governed. Anglo-Saxondom in all its branches belongs to this majority, and we saw in Chapter XI that this great tree was spreading roots and cuttings over a growing area. And when we study a little carefully how in England and in English-speaking lands experts and popular rulers may co-operate, the Platonic dictum seems a little less imperative. The philosopher or the expert should not, does not in these cases, govern, but he should be, and is, more and more frequently, taken into confidence. President Roosevelt's Brain Trust has become somewhat of a jest, but the idea is sound enough. The executive or legislative body must judge of general principles, and estimate both the popular demand and the popular reaction of laws and administrative acts. Experts study the particular problems—economic, agricultural, biological and the like—and advise.

In the growing specialism of science the expert becomes, as such, less qualified to judge of the general bearing of his special interest. The philosophic spirit, which Plato desired and enthroned, must be diffused in all, governed as well as governors. It is as likely to be found in the plain working man who reads and thinks, as in the professor. It should be found, most of all, in the man whom the plain worker charges with the task of making the laws and administering the State. This should be the type for the leaders of government, and the expert should continue to explore his own domain. The waves of autocracy which we are exploring, are not due to him, though in another connexion, which we will mention later, his power and his exclusiveness are a danger both to freedom and to liberal education.

The rise of autocrats and the setback to democracy are by no means general, even outside the limits of the English-speaking world. All the Scandinavian countries and Switzerland preserve their freedom, and develop their social economy on lines very similar to our own. France, too, though she talks continually about Fascists, and harbours more Communist dictators than England, has yet taken no revolutionary step. Even Spain, where domestic divisions are as acute as anywhere, seems settling down to a constitutional system leaning to the Right or Conservative side. When we look further afield—in India and the Far East for example—it is not the rise of autocracy which strikes us, but a rather vague and passionate desire for better conditions of life, or freedom from supposed checks to self-development, for a national ideal which seems at the moment to be a new heaven which might be realized on earth. In such a soil autocracies might easily arise, but it is important to notice

that one-man rule in such cases, as in the others where we may study it to-day, would not be rooted in the dumb and servile following of a superior being, but in the belief that the one man, who had established himself, was carrying out something in which the higher possibilities of those he led were involved. There is a profound difference between such a case and that of the millions who built the Pyramids for the Pharaohs or kissed the ground before the Emperor or the Sultan in Constantinople. The latter trampled on their subjects because they were inferior to them. The former rule, and are sometimes worshipped, like Hitler, because they lift up their subjects into an empyrean where all may rule, or at least enjoy a common glory together. Such is the magic force of the modern belief which is called 'nationalism', and, though we may laugh at its absurdities and deplore its excesses, we cannot ignore its stimulus to action and its transformation of sufferings into joy.

Another fact will strengthen this view. The modern dictators have, with hardly an exception, risen from the ranks of the people and are felt to be bone of their bone. Their presence and power are needed because the nation has suffered a grave reverse like Germany, or has to be built up anew, like Turkey, or welded together from hostile fragments, like Italy. The popular dictator is one of the people, inspired, if not by God, yet by some superhuman force, to make or remake the nation, from elements like himself. There is no such unsatisfied longing in the mind of the Englishman, the Frenchman, the American, or the member of any well established community. He may be suffering from hard times or there may be rogues or fools set in authority over him. If so, let him

bestir himself to get rid of them, or to improve his conditions, and then he may hold up his head, go on with his work and enjoy himself as before.

There seems to be no reason in the nature of man why similar conditions should not be reached in time by every community left quietly to itself, or, still better, encouraged and helped in its upward course by other communities who have trod the same path before them. There is nothing peculiar to a 'Nordic', or any other race, in wishing to be well governed and choosing from its own members those who seem best qualified to do the work. Actually, of course, such a state of things prevails in a large proportion of the states of the world and it is prevented in the remainder, not by the inherent incapacity of their individual citizens or their innate depravity, but simply by want of experience, by divisions within the state itself and by a want of confidence in one another and in the other states which surround them. No nation has ever alighted on any tract of the earth's surface, born fully equipped for its task from the brain of Zeus. The character and capacity of each are acquired by time and practice on the tract it chooses, and some will move more quickly or in larger spheres and others more slowly, in smaller areas or with a more intensive work to carry out. It will be seen, by a consideration of the cases which seem most troubled at the present time, that the trouble in every case arises from the group of men who claim to be the nation, not having secured that community of feeling, that confidence in one another which is essential either for living or acting together. Granted—which is an assumption of this essay—that something like a nation is an ennobling, and even a necessary, thing for human organization

on the planet, we must regard these troubles as the birth-pangs of nations, troubles which in some form have accompanied the settling down of every nation on earth. It may seem invidious to choose examples, but nothing can be properly understood except in the concrete. Let us therefore take Germany, with its rich historic memories, its profound depression after the War, its recent unsettlement and its menacing problems. Is not the primary cause of the two later aspects the fact, that, though settled for centuries in the northern plain of Europe, the Germanic people had never coalesced as one in managing their own affairs, in choosing from among themselves the trusted leaders of a united state, in sinking their differences in the national interest? They had not grown together as nature demands, but were hammered into one by an iron hand which did not succeed, when the crisis came, in preventing a disastrous collapse. What wonder then that in the recovery they should clutch at the first potent means that offered for realizing their collective strength? The individual German felt that he had been betrayed; the collective being had not saved him; there must be a reconstruction of the nation which would give to its joint activities the force and honour which the individual could share.

As we all know, there is a later and higher stage in which the individual finds his satisfaction in the achievements and collectivity of all mankind. This stage seems for the moment to be delayed and obstructed in many ways and many quarters, but it is not for that reason any less necessary or less certain to arrive. It has always been approached by intermediate stages and, when the natural channels of our affections or respect are disturbed, there

must always be a gap and a difficulty in realizing our links with the larger world and our indebtedness towards it. Time builds and heals. In some cases, such as Germany, there were great riches and attainments temporarily thrown out of gear. In others, such as some of the younger states, the structure has to be built up almost from the foundations.

We are in this matter face to face with one of the apparently fundamental contradictions of our nature, and it is worth while giving a moment to considering it in its most general aspect. Man is a social being, i.e., we cannot, in the earliest and most rudimentary form of human existence, find a creature which does not exist by virtue of his links with other beings like himself, by possessing some things—nay, most things—in common with them. Apart from his physical nature, which in itself implies union, his upward movement is based on speech, which is the physical manifestation of mental or spiritual unity. Yet, on the other hand, it is equally impossible to imagine human life, except as shown in individual consciousness and individual action. Thus from the first there is a union, if not of opposites, at least of quite distinct and potentially opposing things. Moreover, the potential opposition does not diminish but actually increases as man develops. His progress has depended largely and increasingly on the appearance of strongly marked individuals: the modern age might be dated by their rise from the Greeks onwards. Yet all such 'Great Men' owe their power to the fact that they belong to a society, derive from it and act through it. For an individual, appearing with exceptional powers and proceeding to use them against others, would either be suppressed as mad or agitate in vain. This

dominance of the social environment has increased, is increasing and is in many ways a serious danger.

Time's process goes on, and man's sphere of collective action extends, until in our own day it embraces the whole planet in a myriad ways and in some of them goes far beyond, encircling space, if not time. This has happened, if we examine the record, by the same combination of individual superiorities and social genesis and support which may be traced in the earlier stages. But the process does not go smoothly on, as if our being moved on rails. There are constant maladjustments, where an individual's powers, or the powers of a group, do not fit in with the general welfare. This is no more to be wondered at than the irregularities of the earth's surface on which the developing groups have to settle. It is indeed much less surprising, seeing the far greater complexity of the elements of biological genesis. The supreme wonder is rather that the main features remain so stable and the upward movement so continuous. But at each step the same integration has to take place, of individual characteristics, eminent or peculiar, with the social environment from which they sprang and within which they have to work. The intermediate beings, such as the family or the nation, which come between the individual and humanity, are an advantage to him by illustrating the need of sociability and breaking the effect of a too-overwhelming whole. This has been often said, with obvious truth, about the family. It is true in various ways about the town, the state, the school, the church, and the thousands of societies which now intervene to draw out, and at the same time to inspire, the individual citizen. The nation, especially when organized in stable political shape, has a specially rich field to work on because it

can appeal in this educative task to terrestrial as well as historical elements and may therefore easily become excessive in its effects. The individual enlarges his being by living with his predecessors and treading the same fields with them. But the local elements, being at hand and much more a part of ourselves, tend naturally to bias us. We tread the fields where Shakespeare trod, but few of us can go on to follow Dante along the banks of the Arno; and if we are Germans, we know the battlefields of Frederic, but have small chance of visiting Alfred in the Isle of Athelney nor an equal interest in him if we do.

Now at any time of great excitement or depression it is the strongest and nearest social factors which come first into play. These add largely to the flood of nationalism which is so conspicuous at the present time. It is the better side of a passion which boils over in opposition to any supposed obstacles to the realization of the patriotic ideal, and is also very readily at the service of a leader who is able at the right moment to appear as the embodiment of the nation's aspirations. How to preserve the good, while discarding the evil and avoiding the dangers, is one of the most serious problems in education.

In recent years the evils have been so apparent that critics of society have been inclined to overlook the good. It is an unquestionable evil that, under the guise of national leadership, dictators in Germany, Italy and elsewhere have been able to exercise an autocratic power which seemed to derive from days of exalted religious enthusiasm and superstition. Strangely enough, the very men who in Germany were exiling, killing and persecuting the Jews, were doing the work in the spirit of the sternest days of ancient Jewish fanaticism. There was again a chosen people,

and again it was for them to trample their enemies in the dust; and their enemies were those who breathed a word of another gospel or failed to practise identical rites. Are we to say that the earlier display of fanatical nationalism was right and good and the later entirely mischievous, that in the earlier case the People were really Chosen and that therefore they were justified in putting their heretic enemies to the sword, whereas in the later case the choice, if made, was by the Evil One?

History and common sense would seem to suggest a rather different answer. In each there was something good, in the sense of a constructive and inspiring force which takes the individual out of himself and gives him confidence in a larger Being, like himself, but taking up his powers, traditions and hopes to a higher and eternal plane. In each case there is a limitation which, when impelled by passion from within, leads to violence and hatred. Where we may be legitimately surprised and disappointed is in finding this limited and violent passion still alive in an age when we had reason to believe that a larger and more comprehensive ideal had been attained. Our optimism, justified on the longer view, had here outstripped the facts. Mankind generally have not yet recognized their kinship and their indebtedness to Humanity.

Turning now to another aspect of the same problem, it will be noticed that the universal tendency of modern science is towards organization of larger and larger units both in industry, in trade and transport, in education and, politically, in such an all-embracing body as the League of Nations. The same combining or levelling force is at work in matters which affect the ways of living, thinking and enjoyment all over the world. Languages generally

spoken become constantly fewer; dress becomes more and more similar, and, greatest tyrant of all, the cinema operated by international syndicates, spreads its attractions into the furthest corners of the earth. When we think of all these things and compare them with the need of freedom for art and thinking, and of individuality for character, we may well feel some sinking of heart at the progress of unification. Nowhere is there a greater call for strength of soul than when we are faced by a machine of our own construction, a creature of human cleverness, which is being worked for some end which can be justified as a human good, or at least a human craving.

At this point we seem to be facing the contradiction of which we spoke above, in its acutest form. By his inventiveness and his power of association Man has in a thousand cases, of which the cinema is one, brought into being either material machines or combinations of human beings, which by their operation repress or destroy the individual inventiveness or power of expression of those who enjoy or submit to them. It is the most general form of the eternal conflict between freedom and organization. Both sides of the antinomy are plainly essential to human efficiency and progress, and it is also plainly true that in recent times the side of organization has been growing rapidly at the expense in many directions of an older freedom which has given us much of the beauty and goodness in the world. A word must be said on this topic before we pass to the concluding chapter; but it can be said only from the point of view of historical data. What facts, if any, seem to be coming prominent which tend to fortify freedom and the personality of the individual against the excessive and levelling force of all kinds of organization?

It may seem strange, but it is surely true, that we must find among these counteracting and freedom-cherishing forces those very national units whose tyranny within their own limits is so often to be deplored. As against an over-unified and mechanized humanity they are a powerful influence on the side of diversity and initiative and it will be noticed that parallel with the rise of world organizations the number of small and patriotic communities has increased and will increase still further. Their competition though often troublesome and sometimes sanguinary is on the whole extremely healthy. Would one see Basques, Welshmen or Montenegrins become indistinguishable from their fellow-Spaniards, fellow-English, or fellow-Slavs?

In industry and for the enjoyment of life we must look to a revival of the free initiative which has given the world so much beauty and happiness in the past. There are abundant signs of such a revival. Everywhere one sees and hears of active interest in making things, of a return to the countryside, of joy in the open air, of dramatic societies, of singing competitions, of fêtes and dancing and sport. The worst effects of the industrialization of a hundred years ago are now at last relieved, as well as the terrible impoverishment and depression of the War. The former has a clear and very significant moral.

When men first began to apply scientific machinery to industry on a large scale, they had no conception of the scope of what they were doing and what it might lead to. There was no limiting moral or general idea. Each man who could possess himself of a machine used it for his own profit and paid those who helped him, the minimum wage which they would accept. He was actually initiating a world revolution in the same blind way in which the conquistadores initiated

the Expansion of the West by raiding Mexico and Peru for their gold. The process being initiated had within it the power of giving the mass of workers a life much fuller of all the goods for which we live, than men had ever enjoyed before; but instead of seeing this and taking betimes the necessary steps to realize it, those first controlling the power seized all the material advantages for themselves and left the mass to shift for themselves as best they could. The years since have been filled by gradual attempts to redress the balance on the part of all concerned—the owners of the plant, the workers and, most of all, the public authorities in the industrialized countries. Much has been done; the state of the workers is now unquestionably better; above all, a new ideal is now firmly established of the sort of society which science renders possible. Everyone now sees that, with goodwill, and with a proper use of the resources of nature developed by science, the earth would yield abundance for a free and stable life. A background of stability, secured by science and organization, on which a free life will develop to heights of power and beauty yet unknown: here is the ideal for the future.

XV

HOPE

We saw in an earlier chapter the varying spirit in which students of history have arisen from their study—the boredom of the children of one generation, the intense interest of others, the horror and amazement at past crimes and intolerance, the thrill at supreme heroism and superhuman beauty. Is there any common measure of all these things, any normal attitude to which we may be tending in an age of history? Undoubtedly far more is known about the past to-day than ever before: we ought to be beginning to make up our minds. It is unfortunate, from this point of view, that the Great War came just in the midst of our greatest accumulation of the facts of history. The War itself provided enough new material for generations of historians, and it is not of a kind which fits in very well with the bulk of the material, at least of modern history. For modern history had been turning more and more on political developments, on social legislation, on the accumulation of wealth, on discoveries and explorations. These go on, of course, some of them with increased velocity owing to the War. But the War itself interposed a tragic and tremendous episode of quite another kind and has had in addition a far-reaching effect on the way in which a large mass, perhaps the majority, of students of the past regard the whole picture. It has certainly upset the complacency with which peaceful progress was commonly treated as the most recent phase of history. It also increased the

popular appetite for the sensational and disastrous, and has given a fresh prominence to men and actions of the fighting and commanding type. It contributed directly, as we saw in the last chapter, to the rise and triumph of dictatorial governments in a good many countries which were most shaken by the events to which it led.

It is a critical moment for reviewing the whole position and asking whether there is any ground for bowing the head to the storm and for holding that the future may, and probably will, bring forth only a fresh crop of horrors worse even than the worst of the past; or whether we may, perhaps with qualified confidence, go back to the earlier view and hold that the future contains a prospect of unlimited improvement and happiness for mankind. Obviously it is a question of supreme importance, the greatest perhaps which man can frame relating to his species as a whole. The material for an answer is drawn from history, but the mind which frames it must be philosophical, and the spirit which animates it religious.

When we say 'religious', we must at once distinguish and explain. While it is true that men have always been in some sense religious, it is equally true that their religions have been of such different tenor, and inspired such different outlooks on the world, that it may seem a hard thing to draw from them any common element affecting the question under discussion. We think it not impossible; but one must on the threshold quite definitely dismiss one type of religious belief as irrelevant to the matter in hand. Many religions, but by no means all, have held that men are destined by a Supreme Being or Powers, to another life, in quite another place, where wrongs would be redressed, ill-doings punished, and a happier and

more perfect existence provided, of which they might have dreams, but never the reality, on earth.

Now, whatever the validity of such beliefs may be, they do not in any way contradict the belief that human conditions on the earth have improved, and promise still further improvement. It may be that in the past such beliefs have diverted men's minds from the active pursuits of terrestrial betterment, but there is no theoretical necessity that they should do so. Nor is there—and this is the relevant religious point—any reason why the human forces, of hope and effort, even of appeal to superhuman powers, should not be applied for the achievement of a terrestrial as for a celestial heaven. Actually some transfer of such aspirations and endeavour from the one object to the other has taken place in recent times, and it was with this in mind that it was said above that the spirit which animates a belief in progress, must be largely religious. Religion to-day is turning itself more and more in this direction, and it is right to consider as religious these ardent self-compelling strivings, fortified by faith, for a better life on earth, which are so marked a feature of the present age. The religious side therefore is the faith which compels and fortifies devotion for a common good.

But such faith is not irrational; it does not compel its believers to work for an object of which there is no evidence, either in the present or the past. Some religions have inspired their devotees to sacrifices and efforts of the most extreme kind for objects plainly unattainable or even harmful. Men have offered themselves also, and toiled unremittingly, for ends which could not be guaranteed by any exercise of reason or any calculus of probability. In such cases, while the heroism is inspiring, the positive value of the work must remain in doubt.

Now some impulse towards the future, fortified by a faith which, whatever its formulæ, we must call religious, is an essential element in the advance of mankind. But it does not act in empty space; the material on which it is constantly working, is given by the past. Whatever view we may take of this material, even if we fail to find in it the ground of future hopes, it is from the past that we derive our condemnations, our admiration, our pity, our ideals. Drawn from the past, they are remodelled and projected into the ever-growing present. It is from this unavoidable relation of past, present and future that the supreme importance of the study of history arises. The connexion has always existed, and men have always been fashioning their future from the past of themselves and other beings. But, gradually, with the growth of knowledge, with increased critical powers, with a wider range of comparison between different stages and types of civilized life, a new era has come in recent times in which man begins to sum up and evaluate his history, and asks with some anxiety, "Whither next—and after that?"

It will be seen at once that such enquiries must arise from more than the study of the details of history. The closest absorption in the civilization, say of the ancient Egyptians, will give us by itself no clue to the future chances of the world. No period or people by themselves can give the conception of a movement which embraces all and goes back ultimately to a form of life lower than the human, and from which the human has, as we now believe, slowly developed in time. Comparison is needed; and to the comparison of different ages and types there has been added in our own day the conception of a general biological evolution in which man shares like the rest. To gain, therefore, really sound and enlightening ideas on the course of human history, we need to add to the lower conceptions

which describe man's fundamental nature as part of the animal world, those higher generalizations which belong to him as man. The two are inextricably blended; but, as time goes on, the human features become more dominant and more common to all the race. To trace these in their growth is the highest general function of history. It enquires into and verifies particulars: and so far it is scientific: it goes beyond the particulars, seeking their general connexions and their root in the nature of man himself; so far it is philosophic.

Now it so happens that in this enquiry, unlike that into most branches of science, the most important general idea dawned obviously on men's minds, as soon as they began to reflect seriously on the comparison between themselves and the other living denizens of the planet. Man was the reasoning animal. He desired to know, and the better the man, the more willing he was to guide his conduct by the dictates of his reason, enlightened by knowledge. Such thoughts about man's nature may be found in germ among the sayings of the earliest sages of Egypt; they are expressly formulated by the Greeks, and above all by the greatest of Greek thinkers, Aristotle. The fact itself was irresistible; any man must be conscious of it when he surveyed the conquest his fellows had made of other living creatures and considered the laws of approximate reason or justice which governed his relations with other men. What was wanted, however, from the first and has not yet come fully into the consciousness of man, was the idea of the evolution of reason as being the leading thread in the history of mankind. Other things crowded into the forefront of the temporal scene which seemed to make up history, and, though we find stray references in ancient writers to an earlier savage state and the growth of civilization among men,

yet in their connected histories, when they set out to relate what seemed to them the most important things to put on record, they turned to wars and conquest—Herodotus to the fight against the Persian, Thucydides to the Peloponnesian war, Livy and Polybius to the building up of the Roman State and so on. These were momentous events but not the bedrock of human history.

The preoccupation of historians, from these early times almost to the present, with questions of war, of dynasties and of the formation of states, is easily understood, but nevertheless misleading for the right appreciation by mankind of the truth as to their long upward evolution and their destiny. The writers, like most of us during the Great War, were either personally engaged, or had close friends and relations killed or wounded. Besides this, the wars themselves, and the territorial and other changes which arose from them, were important matters, though not of the supreme importance which they appeared to possess at the moment. Wars undoubtedly made the Roman Empire, and from the Roman Empire the framework of modern Europe, with its legal basis, is derived. This is a capital case and men will always quite rightly desire to know how it happened and how it has affected the sequel. Yet it is surely equally right to maintain that even so great an event should be put on the second, and not the highest rank of permanent human values. Quite apart from the supreme merits of Greek art and poetry—the work of Homer or Pheidias, the lyrics of Aristophanes or the dialogues of Plato—we must also hold that without the Greeks the Romans could not have effected their administrative and cultural unification of the Mediterranean world. They followed Alexander who was inspired by Greek ideas, and their thought of a common law of nations is closely akin to the Greek

idea of a cosmic reason which is the foundation of science.

But it will be easier to get a true perspective of the whole process if we leave for the moment all discussion of particular events and place ourselves outside the world, with its tumult of happening, and imagine a philosophic mind surveying the scene from another planet. How would he summarize the change from Cave Man to Modern Civilization? What would strike him as the most salient and significant facts in man's development? There can be no doubt as to his reading of the story. A creature, living with difficulty in unceasing conflict, unable to count even the fingers of one hand, quite unaware even of the extent of his own home planet, had—say within a quarter of a million years—so changed, that his thought, linking up with the thought of his fellows, had gone round the universe, measuring and weighing other heavenly bodies invisible to his eyes. And, within his own domain, he had established a contact so perfect with men living all over its surface that events were known and words reported instantly to all listening men. Exchange of thought, if not community of sentiment, had made this new creature intellectually another species from his progenitor of the cave. Were it not for the careful tracing of anatomical affinities, no one would believe them akin; and this very affinity had only been established, to the satisfaction of the man himself, by the triumphant revelations of a collective mind.

To the planetary philosopher from above this aspect of history must seem so transcendent that much, if not most, of the matter enshrined in out traditional histories would lack significance, and our bickerings of the day and fears of the future appear senseless. What meaning can be given to pro-Aryan or non-Aryan fanaticism in terms of the growth of the human mind?

Or how can men whose thought has encircled the universe, tremble lest a fit of madness should lead them to an orgy of mutual destruction? Surely a plain tale, true in its facts and rich in its lessons, of what man has already achieved of note and permanence in constructive thought, should be the best remedy for depression, the strongest encouragement to hope.

To work out this story in its completeness and interconnections is a task for generations of historians. We have had some valiant essays in that direction in English, and other nations, notably the French, with a stronger turn for synthesis than ourselves, have gone still further. Some hints of possible directions of study have been given in previous chapters and before one comes to the concluding note, there is a preliminary general remark to be made. In speaking of the growth of the collective mind of man as the leading thread in history, that feature in his evolution which would most strongly impress the philosopher in Mars, it should not be understood merely to imply the history of science. That is the central strand, but much more comes round it. Man's mind in growing stronger and more comprehensive has drawn its strength from every side of his constructive activity. Art as well as science, state-building as well as law, even war, by binding each side of the contending forces together and stimulating their courage and self-sacrifice, all have played a valuable and necessary part. But whereas war, as one hopes, is a vanishing quantity, and state-building should one day have done its main fundamental work, science and art of all kinds are of illimitable scope. Science, advancing side by side with the growing consolidation of the world by a religious sympathy, is the surest landmark as well as the central thread.

In Chapter IX an attempt was made to place religious sympathy, with its effects on morality, in due relation

to the science and art of the Greek and the organizing power of the Romans. This side of man's evolution has continued and is as prominent to-day as the growth of science. While, superficially, there is far less religious observance and a widespread decay of accepted dogmas, actually, religion in its moral and sympathetic aspect is more potent than ever. This is a commonplace to those who know the ardent work for peace and social welfare and education going on throughout the world on a religious basis. But it involves historically the reality and the value of the life and thought of those who stand between us and the origin of Christianity.

And if this is so and with the triumphant advance of science clear before us, is it a sane view to ignore or question the hopeful augury of history for the future?

To take the hopeful view is not to palliate the evils of the present but to believe that there is now in the world a stronger reservoir of will and knowledge capable of redressing them than man has ever possessed before. One cannot believe that, by improving his implements for extracting and employing the stores and secrets of nature, man has actually rendered himself incapable of enjoying or distributing them. Has the rational being *par excellence* in our universe, suddenly become irrational?

The general explanation of the grave, but no doubt temporary maladjustments of the present is not so serious as this; it may be paralleled in the past. The human mind has, as often before, pressed on with exceptional zeal and success in certain directions, while other sides of the essentially integral process have for the time fallen into arrear. We are pressing, for instance, production of new and more varied crops from the soil, at a time when the means of distribution, and the economic conditions of large parts of the world, make the consumption of the product impossible. While the

farmers of Canada are making three blades grow instead of one, millions in Russia or China may be dying of famine. Such things rightly seem monstrous to an eye which surveys the human problem as a whole; but they need not, and should not, seem insoluble. So with nationalism, in a world increasingly and necessarily international. Here, for the normal, well-established nation a solution has been reached, for it finds no no difficulty in reconciling a pride in its own existence and achievements with the recognition of an equal right in others. Hope suggests the gradual spread of the same spirit generally, and one is encouraged to hope by the striking similarity in the progress of social and hygienic reforms in one country after another in recent years.* Here science, socially applied, has made good its claims.

It is true that certain problems appear for the time peculiarly intractable; the general reduction of armaments and the unification and stabilization of money will occur at once to the mind. The former is largely moral. It would be solved by an increase of goodwill and confidence in the world. The latter, though complicated by moral, or at least national, prejudices and timidity, is mainly due to extreme complications introduced by men's own ingenuity. No one can really understand all the factors or conditions involved, or predict what other men would do, when faced by a change in the inextricable tangle. Every one has the strongest suspicion of the brilliant theorist who professes to see through the tangle in a glance, and make all plain by a stroke of a pen. A temperate and well grounded hope makes no such claim. But it does suggest that, if we may read history at all as a guide to the future, the past is a record of maladjustments made good.

* See René Sand. *L'Economie Humaine par la Médecine Sociale*, Paris, Rieder.

If man is still, as it would appear, for the most part vigorous and sane, and is now incomparably better instructed than he was, the same result should occur again, this time more quickly.

It would be a gross misreading of history to treat the work of the Greeks as abortive because their science died out in their own hands, and because there were certain flaws in their civilization which led to its final absorption in other forms by the Romans and the Christian world. "*Non omnis moriar*" should be the motto of each succeeding stage in the human story, and, as the Greeks found their complement in the Romans and their immortality in us, so the Romans again were corrected on their worst side by the new humanity of the Christian ethos and live transformed.

Are we then growing perfect through this continued process of transmitted good and corrected evil? Not perfect, but more and more conscious of the possibilities of the human ideal, and, strong in a conviction of the reality of the process, resolved that it shall prevail.

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